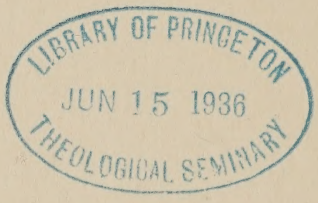
CHRISTIANITY AND PERSONALITY



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CHRISTIANITY AND PERSONALITY

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CHRISTIANITY AND PERSONALITY

by

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ROUND TABLE PRESS, INC.
NEW YORK 1936

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY
SELECT PRINTING COMPANY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

TO JOHN KNOX MCLEAN, CHARLES SUMNER NASH, GEORGE DEWITT CASTOR, AND JOHN WILLIAM JOHNSON, COLLEAGUES BELOVED, IN MEMORY OF CONVERSE UPON HIGH THEMES ON DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

In eternis altis vos saluto

As for my own part, Meno, I would not contend very strenuously for the truth of my argument in other respects; but that in thinking it our duty to seek after the knowledge of things we are at present ignorant of, we should become better men, more manly, and less idle, than if we suppose it not possible for us to find out, nor our duty to inquire into, what we know not; this I would, if I were able, strongly, both by word and deed, maintain. *Socrates.*

Preface

THE way is opening toward a wider and deeper understanding of personality. Significant concurrences in several fields are contributing to this end. Psychology, after having broken through the long confinement of the faculty psychology and after having explored, though not exhausted, the possibilities of the experimental method, is entering upon a profounder study of mental activity, and of that which conditions all forms of psychology, *i.e.*, consciousness itself.[1] Ethics, having passed beyond contentment with conventionality and casuistry, is now prepared, impelled by Christianity, and steadied and guided by the formal principle of Kantianism, to construct an ethics which is both formal and creative. Natural science, though still in the main naively empirical, is becoming aware of the necessity of examining its fundamental concepts and is thus recognizing the priority of mind. Current philosophy, wearied with the long and needless conflict of Idealism and Realism, is moving toward their synthesis in the light of Intuitionism and Valuism. Out of all this there is emerging the means and opportunity for a more constructive and progressive Personalism.

This volume is an endeavor to outline some of the principles and problems of such a Personalism in the light of

[1] I refer particularly to "the Vienna School" of Brentano, out of which has come *Phenomenology* which, as a study of the *contents* of consciousness, transcends psychology and thus becomes a metaphysic.

Christianity. Inadequate as it is, as a discussion of so large a theme, it is in no sense a mushroom growth. It has taken shape slowly and has weathered a good deal of storm and drought. The substructure of the volume is that of the N. W. Taylor Lectures which the author gave at Yale University in 1914. Chapters III, V, and X, greatly revised and enlarged, are lectures of this course. A part of Chapter I was delivered as the annual Andover Alumni Lecture at the commencement of Andover Newton Theological Institution in 1932. Chapters VII and VIII were given as lectures at the Pastoral Conference of Pacific School of Religion in 1932. Chapters IV, VI, IX, and XI have been added in order to enlarge the presentation of the subject and to take up aspects of personality essential to its better understanding in relation to ethical, philosophical, and theological problems.

The close relation of all of these lectures and writings to one another, as revised for this purpose, and their convergence toward a common goal gives them, I think, a consecutive and unitary character which I trust will be as apparent to the reader as to the author. The first chapter introduces the subject with an evaluation of personality, and the second discusses the nature of personal knowledge. The third chapter points out the close relation of Personalism to Christianity. Chapters IV, V, and VI set forth the three levels, or forms, of personality: Man the developing person, Christ the ideal person, God the perfect person. The next two chapters relate to the knowledge of God as Person. Following these is a brief presentation of Nature (Chapter

IX) as the medium for the free interchange of persons. Chapter X dwells upon the immortal relations of persons to one another. The concluding chapter offers a reinterpretation of the Christian conceptions of the Divine omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence in the light of personality.

The affirmations and interpretations herein made (as is the case with most books in this field and others) often assume the form and manner of finality, as if the author felt that he were giving the principles which he discusses their one and only conclusive formulation. It is needless to disclaim so crude an assumption. The only sufficient justification for essaying such a task as this lies in the fact that it is essential to mental integrity and spiritual well-being to try to think into and interpret the verities which transcend yet illumine our human thought and imagining.

The author presents this volume as a distinct advance beyond his former books in the field of personality, not only carrying much farther the study of the nature of personality itself but, as the title indicates, dealing throughout particularly with the relation of Personality to Christianity.

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CHRISTIANITY AND PERSONALITY

CHRISTIANITY AND PERSONALITY

I

An Evaluation of Personality

PERSONALITY, together with development and relativity, may be regarded as one of the three most distinctive and luminous concepts of our time. The more it is investigated and used the more expansive and enriching it becomes. The personal realm is one in which humanity has always dwelt, continually advancing its freehold, but as yet it has been only partially explored and developed. Including, as it does, the realm of mind, the domain of personality is far vaster and more significant than the physical universe, which without it would not be. Its values make material wealth tawdry and its possibilities are beyond our power to grasp.

Man has explored his planetary home. It is time to explore himself. This is the greater task, the more difficult adventure. It would be provincial to imply that this is a new enterprise. The great explorers of personality in the past—Plato, Jesus, Paul, Augustine, Leibniz, Kant, Fichte, Coleridge, and the rest—long since navigated its oceans and discovered its continents, while later thinkers like James Ward, Lotze, Brentano, Husserl, Renouvier, Bergson, Bowne, Royce,

James, Howison, and others (to say nothing of prophets and poets, mystics and seers) have greatly enlarged our knowledge of its meaning and value. Yet a vast amount of search and research, thinking and striving, artistry and application, theoretical and practical, remains, and will always remain, to be done. We are being told, and rightly, that the great task of today is to reconstruct the social order, but this can hardly be done without a deeper knowledge of personal values.

Yet no sooner have we begun to enter more fully into the larger significance of personality than we find ourselves confronted by certain superficial uses of the term which threaten to rob it of its higher meaning and to envelop it in confusion and futility. It may be said of personality, as someone said of Scripture: "It is like a wax nose, everyone twists it to suit his fancy."

I

The least serious of these devaluations is a trivial use of the word for those forms of address, manners, and approach to others which produce a pleasant impression and secure social or commercial advancement. Perhaps there is a place for this cult of the external self; but it is most unfortunate that the term *personality,* which is so full of meaning for philosophy, ethics, and religion, and whose history has prepared it for so much higher a mission, should be captured and put to so menial a service. It is making this conceptual Samson grind in the mills of the Philistines.

One of the aims of this superficial personality-cult is to reduce all human beings to types, in order to enable one who has acquired the technique to pigeon-hole persons according to certain surface traits and then to use this knowledge for his own advantage. There are human types, and it is well to learn to recognize them, but the belittling thing about much of this popular personality "psychology" is that it sees in a given individual only a type and fails to recognize that he is also a unique self with qualities and capacities all his own.

The striking and significant fact about human beings is that they transcend types. Individuality pushes through type, puts its stamp on each separate self, and then breaks the mold. Nor is individuality a mere matter of thumb-prints, or the lines of the nose, or the slant of the forehead, or the curve of the lips, or the tone of the voice, or the way of saying and doing things, or even of temperament. There is in each of us a certain something which constitutes him a *self,* quite single and unresolvable, so that no other can take his place among all the myriads of human beings. "That in each of us which makes him stranger to every thinkable type is at once the portion of an outcast and the heritage of a king." [1]

When I read in educational text-books, "an individual is a system of habits," I find myself asking: whose habits? The individual makes, or at any rate has a hand in making, his habit systems, therefore they are his. Moreover the individuating process goes on as character develops. The

[1] E. A. Singer, *The Philosophical Review,* March, 1931, p. 122.

individual comes to his full value only as his individuality is fused and forged into something much greater, *i.e.*, personality. Men become more and more unique and interesting as well as worthful (contrary to a common notion) as they develop in personal character.

II

A far heavier misfortune also has befallen the idea of personality. It has not only been cheapened and exploited by popular psychology, it has been placed under the ban of the prevailing experimental psychology, much of which —supposedly in the interest of science—would throw selfhood out of court as a purely imaginary creation. Devaluations of personality, often amounting to denial, have rapidly followed in the wake of experimental psychology. It is quite easy by ignoring all higher qualities and motives to resolve human motives and conduct into nothing but automatisms, tropisms, reflexes, compensations, defence mechanisms, and the like; for it is one of the prerogatives of reason to reason itself away (although it still survives the attempted suicide) and of freedom to freely deny its own existence. The psychologist who assumes that personality is contained within the psycho-physical structure and functions is like an electrician assuming that electricity is confined within its conductor.

It has been astonishing to observe the unscientific precipitancy with which experimental psychology, behaviorism, and Freudian psychoanalysis, beginning about the second

quarter of the present century, have thrust aside self-psychology and taken over the teaching of psychology in our American universities and colleges. Not that these forms of psychology are by any means false or worthless. On the contrary, they are contributing much to the understanding and practical direction of mental life.[2]

Already the findings of experimental and abnormal psychology have been put to excellent service in various directions. Confusion arises only when these new forms of psychology claim to cover the whole field of mental and moral life and seek to drive the idea of a self into exile as the bogy of an outworn introspective method. "In psychology," declares Bertrand Russell, "the ego has disappeared as an ultimate conception, and the unity of a personality has become a peculiar causal nexus among a series of events." [3] This sounds alarming, but happily the self is not so easily dispossessed. One may almost detect an amused smile on its face as the dust raised by its assailants settles. "For it would be strange indeed," as Socrates said to Theætetus, "if there are many perceptual powers within us, as if we were so many wooden horses of Troy, and not rather one entity, whether we call it soul or not, by which we perceive whatever we perceive through the senses." There is no reason to fear that the self will be permanently ejected,[4] but there is much reason to fear that its essential reality will be lost hold

[2] *Cf. Psychologies of 1930*, edited by Carl Murchison. Clark University Press, 1931. Also, Woodworth, *Contemporary Schools of Psychology*. The Ronald Press Co., New York, 1931.

[3] *Philosophy*, p. 243. W. W. Norton & Co., 1927.

[4] *Cf.* J. M. Coffin's *The Soul Comes Back*. The Macmillan Co., 1929.

of by many would-be *non-selves,* with serious consequences to themselves and others.

III

A still more serious devaluation of personality is the disposition to resolve it into animality. The virtual slogan of much recent psychology, "Back to the animal for a clue to mental life," has already been resolved in some quarters into "Back to the animal for our satisfactions and standards." [5] Carl Sandburg, in his poem "Wilderness," has pictured the animalized mind in all its crudity and bestiality.

> "There is a wolf in me . . . fangs pointed for tearing gashes . . . a red tongue for raw meat . . . and the hot lapping of blood—I keep this wolf because the wilderness gave it to me and the wilderness will not let it go.
> There is a baboon in me . . . clambering-clawed . . . dog-faced . . . yapping a galoot's hunger . . . hairy under the armpits . . . I keep the baboon because the wilderness says so.
> And not a wolf and a baboon only, but a fox, a lion, a hog, an eagle, a mocking bird, and much besides:
> Oh, I got a zoo, I got a menagerie, inside my ribs, under my bony head, under my red-valve heart:
> I am a pal of the world: I came from the wilderness."

From the wilderness, yes; but from the wilderness to manhood (as portrayed in the same author's *Abraham Lincoln,*

[5] *e.g.,* "Animals we are and animals we remain and the path to our regeneration and happiness, if there be such a path, lies through our animal nature." Mrs. Bertrand Russell. *The Right to Be Happy,* p. 241. Harper & Brothers, 1927.

let us say) has been a long hard climb, and unless man has a care he will slink back to the wilderness, and to something worse; for the road back to the animal leads to a state far lower than the animal. The current cult of human animalism points toward the realization of Tennyson's apprehension (not to be despised because it is "Mid-Victorian"):

> "We to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
> Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower gains."

"Men are not animals erect," wrote Lord Bacon, "but immortal gods. The Creator has given us souls equal to all the world, and yet satiable not even with a world." Shakespeare's famous tribute to man, rewritten in the light of modern psychology, would read something like this: *What a piece of work is man! How weak in reason! How powerful in instincts! In form and movement how reflexive and mechanistic! In action how like an ape! In behavior how like an amœba! The dupe of all the world! The animal of animals.*

If such misconceptions and misleadings as these can be kept from obscuring personal values,[6] there is no reason why coming generations may not go on into a much deeper and

[6] Besides these positive devaluations, personality is obscured by such inadequate valuations as those of Instrumentalism (*Cf. Personality and Psychology*, pp. 116-120) and Neo-Realism. Nor can Professor Whitehead be regarded as affording an adequate evaluation of personality with his account of a person as "a genetic relation between occasions of human experience," although he grants that "personal unity is an inescapable fact." *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 239.

richer mining of the mother-lode of personality than has yet been made. If, instead of "Back to the animal" the watchword should be made, "Forward to the higher man," what might not be attained in the future! No fact is of greater significance than the undeveloped possibilities of personal and social progress resident in humankind.

IV

Much has been done of late years to aid in the understanding and development of personality by educational psychology. And yet its limitations are as marked as its values. I cannot better illustrate this than by reference to a representative book in this general field, *Understanding Human Nature*. No compendium of the best results of the newer educational psychology presumably stands higher than Dr. Alfred Adler's well-known volume, with this title.[7] It is an acute, analytic, experimental study of human traits of character in their rise and development and is full of penetrative analysis and practical suggestions of great value. Yet as a picture of human nature it is depressing in the extreme. It makes the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin seem cheerful by comparison; for the deep shadows of Calvin's picture of the corruption of human nature are offset by the contrasted joys and attainments of the redeemed.

According to Professor Adler there is one dominating impulse that rules everyone's conduct from early childhood,

[7] Translated by Walter Béran Wolfe. Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1927.

with its fears and selfishness, through youth with its dreams and ambitions, maturity with its competitions and jealousies, and even to the end of one's days. It is the love of power—not so much real power as power to dominate others. The goal of the "power hungry individual" is always superiority, not intrinsic superiority but selfish relative superiority. "In the last analysis, we go about interpreting everything from the standpoint of the heightening of our personal self-esteem." [8] This impulse has led to the age-long domination of man over woman, it governs the relations of children to one another, and is the key to conduct in all spheres of life.

Over against this dominating desire of the individual Dr. Adler places its opposite, "social feeling," upon which the well-being of society depends, but this proves to be far from pure altruism, as the following statement will show.

> The social feeling, next to the striving for power, plays the most important role in the development of character. It is expressed, just as is the striving for significance, in the first psychic tendencies of the child, especially in his desire for contact and tenderness. . . . The social feeling is influenced both by the feeling of inferiority and its compensatory striving for power. Human beings are very sensitive media for the development of inferiority complexes of all kinds. The process of psychic life, the disquiet that seeks for compensations, that demands security and totality, begins as soon as the feeling of inferiority appears, for the purpose of securing peace and happiness in life.[9]

It is quite possible and plausible to construct a theory of

[8] *Understanding Human Nature*, p. 166.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

human life and conduct upon this pattern, to resolve ethics into psychology, and to ignore religion and its motives altogether. But as for anything like a just and comprehensive view of human nature—in which it is comprehensively surveyed in the light of religion and ethics and of a deeper and more fundamental psychology—we have here nothing of the kind. It is like forming an idea of a home by examining the cellar and kitchen, with perhaps a glance into the dining-room, but never a look at the library and music room or the quiet corners of the living room, to say nothing of ascending to the upper story for the view. One has only to turn to a book like Professor G. H. Palmer's *Altruism* to recover his faith in human kind.

V

In the effort to look more searchingly into the nature of personality and its values, which we are here attempting, it is well to be on guard, however, against the danger of making a shibboleth of the term.[10] It must always be remembered that personality is only a concept, standing for a greater reality than itself. Already, even in its higher meaning, the word has come to wear something of that air of pallor and exhaustion that so quickly attaches to public and much abused individuals and ideas. One need not idolize the term

[10] For a discussion of the etymology, history, and content of the term *personality* consult: *A Contribution to the History of the Word Person*, by A. Trendelenberg; Eucken, *Main Currents of Modern Thought;* Bowne, *Personalism;* Knudson, *The Philosophy of Personalism;* G. H. Palmer, *The Nature of Goodness;* R. T. Flewelling, *Creative Personality;* Hilda Oakley, *A Study in the Philosophy of Personality;* J. W. Buckham, *Personality and the Christian Ideal;* R. M. Vaughan, *The Significance of Personality.*

in order to have the deepest sense of the value of that for which it stands.

Let it be freely granted that it is a difficult task to plumb personality. We have little to draw with and the well is deep. Why, then, invade so unfathomable a realm, with its introspections,[11] its paradoxes, and its perplexities? The answer is: Since we experience personality we already know something of it, more in fact than of anything else, and upon that basis we may hope to learn more. The inherent sense of its value prompts a search for its meaning, lest the consciousness of the value itself become dim and obscure.

The child was a bit forward, but quite right as to the sense of values, who, in reply to the question put to a group of youngsters: "What is in the world that was not here fifty years ago?" called out: *"Me!"* Not airplanes, nor radios, much less robots, are the latest and most important arrivals, but children, fresh from the great Deep, selves, *persons-in-the-making*. But why? What constitutes these absorbing personal value-bearers? Whence is personality? What is its destiny? These are difficult questions. We cannot hope to sound their depths. It will be enough if we gain a little more of the meaning and vital implications of so inexhaustible a reality.[12]

[11] The introspectionist is now in disrepute, but he is far from having told his full story, to say nothing of interpreting it.

[12] Since writing the above I have come upon the following estimate (by one the weight of whose judgment will at once be recognized), of the difficulty and yet the promise of the study of personality. "The problem of personality seems as hard as it is important. Not without reason have thinkers throughout the ages shied off from it. But it holds precious secrets for those who will seriously devote themselves to the new science as disciples of personality." Jan Smuts, *Holism*, p. 289. The Macmillan Co., 1926.

VI

The more personality is probed the clearer it becomes that it is essentially *supernatural*. The term is here used in the sense of that which transcends nature. It is very misleading that, instead of being associated with what is personal and spiritual, the term supernatural has been connected with the miraculous and contranatural. Miracles, as generally conceived, are contranatural; persons are supernatural. For whatever surpasses nature, rises above it, is by that fact supernatural. Horace Bushnell, in his *Nature and the Supernatural* (1858), was a pioneer in pointing out that by virtue of his moral nature man is himself a supernatural as well as a natural being.[13] When this conception of man becomes generally recognized and accepted we will be out of the woods of Naturalism.

Has it ever occurred to the doubter of the supernatural that every real home is a constant demonstration of its reality? The true mother is nothing less than a supernatural being. Every time she meets and conquers her natural desires and inclinations in devotion to others she demonstrates the power of a life above nature.[14] Her indomitable love and courage lift her life into the supernatural realm. Day and night she is constantly saying *no* to what nature and instinct

[13] *Cf.* the writer's *Progressive Religious Thought in America,* Chapter I. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1929.

[14] If one is reminded that the lioness and the mother bird exhibit a like unselfish devotion the answer is that instinctive motherhood—admirable as it is and precursor of intelligent motherhood—is of another order and on another level from human motherhood.

urge, choosing instead the sacrificial acts which love and duty prompt. Through long practise this self-denial becomes so habitual as to be "second nature," a nature that is deeply human to the extent to which it is really super-nature.

Of all "natural" (in the sense of spontaneous and expressive) beings, a real "saint" is the most *natural;* yet every act and word and motive is filled with the quality and flavor of another world than this. Goodness, cheer, purity, love radiate from such an one as naturally as rays from a star; yet he who imagines that this result can be won without long and patient devotion to an ideal is greatly mistaken. If character is not supernatural, what is? Every unselfish person is born from above. It is this every-day supernaturalism that keeps humanity from going back to chaos and old night. Nothing is so real as the supernatural; for the supernatural is the spiritual, and the spiritual is the personal, and the personal is "what men live by."

Man can, in fact, be understood only in terms of personality. He is the finite, imperfect, developing person, who, in Browning's words, "partly is and wholly hopes to be." *Even if there were no personality above that of man he would be a supernatural being.*[15] For human personality, though finite, reaches up into the Infinite. It partakes already not only of "the powers of the world to come," but of the world that eternally is.

[15] Perhaps the ablest advocacy of a view of personality as confined to humanity is that of Hilda Oakley in her volume, *A Study in the Philosophy of Personality* (London, Williams & Norgate, 1928). A criticism of her viewpoint by the present writer may be found in *The Personalist,* April, 1931.

VII

The personal, or supernatural, realm is the realm of ultimate reality. Persons take precedence, both in certainty and value, of all other forms of reality. That this principle is far from general acceptance, either philosophical or popular, is no disproof of its validity. Neither the rationalist nor the empiricist recognizes the full meaning of the personal realm. By the matter-of-fact "personality" is looked upon as a kind of sentimental wraith, something that belongs to the embroidery of life and not to its main texture, a theme for poetry, philosophy, and religion rather than the very pith and marrow of reality.

The real things, to the mind (let us say) of "the average man," are the supposedly solid earth and the things in and about it, space and the objects "in it," causes and effects, houses and lands, flesh and blood, food and drink, health and wealth, markets and money, percentages and averages. Invisible things like right and wrong, goodwill and truth, the beautiful and the ideal, are insubstantial, secondary, marginal—to be granted a sort of tolerance but not allowed to interfere too much with the chief goods and ongoings of the real, *i.e.*, the material, world.

This point of view is practical, plausible, and in general pleasant, but as unverifiable and insubstantial as it regards spiritual reality to be. The fact is that most of those who hold it really live, in part at least, by something much deeper and more essential. Otherwise they would be living on the plane of life that does not rise above the level of the senses.

Jesus describes such a life in the calm but revealing words: "As it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they planted, they builded, they married, they were given in marriage until——" But what was wrong about that kind of life? it is asked. Should not folk eat and drink and build and marry? Certainly, they should. Nothing was wrong in all this—except everything. For this kind of living is not *life*.

When our normal human activities and relations lose their personal qualities and values they are worse than empty. Nothing becomes so intolerably dreary and desolate as life without spiritual motives, affections, and ideals. It issues in what Browning calls "the ghastly smooth life, dead at heart." The naive assumption which underlies the common sense view of reality—that the world of sense objects is the only real world—yields to the conclusion reached by F. H. Bradley: "Outside of Spirit there is not and there cannot be any reality, and the more that anything is spiritual so much the more is it veritably real."

VIII

To give to spiritual values the first place by no means implies, however, despising the material side of life. The sense world is not an unreal world except as detached from a higher world. It is folly to flout the "things of the flesh." We are bound to do justice to the physical side of our nature. The senses neither cheat nor lie. To fly in their face without sufficient reason is to court defeat and disaster for the

higher ends which the lower should serve. Yet the basic principle underlying Personalism is that the true order of reality is exactly the reverse of that which common sense, or rather the philosophy of common sense, sets up; for experience proves, in the long run, that the external world, taken at its face value only, is appearance and not reality. To live (so far as that is possible) in a world of *mere* sense objects and instincts is to live underground, as it were, in a cave, as Plato pictured it, seeing only shadows. It is only when one comes up from this underworld into "the light of life" that he discovers the greater realities which are moral, personal, spiritual.

II

The Nature of Personal Knowledge

No one doubts that he knows himself and other selves. But how and why? That may seem to be what the Scots would call a "stickit" question. Yet to pursue it leads one into some very vital and meaningful discoveries, the first of which is that the knowledge of persons is *a distinct form of knowledge,* which has been so far confused with other forms of knowledge as to lose much of its real meaning.

I

Knowledge—corresponding in this respect to reality—is manifestly of different kinds and degrees, according to that toward which it is directed.

For me to know a book, *e.g.*—let us say my copy of Plato's *Republic*—requires all three of the following forms of knowledge: (1) I know my *Republic* as a sense-object, a book, of a certain size, binding, paper, type-impression, etc., a knowledge consisting of certain percepts and concepts in relation to contexts (such as language and printing) brought

together and unified by the mind. This may be termed perceptual-conceptual knowledge. (2) Another and more interior knowledge that I have of the book relates to its *meaning, i.e.,* the thought conveyed from its pages to my mind. This is of far more consequence than its character as a particular sense-object.

As I peruse the printed page my mind embraces certain images and ideas, which constitute a realm by itself, a world within the book, yet beyond it, communicated through it, but essentially independent of it. Some of these images and ideas are imaginative, *i.e.,* clothed in sense-forms, others are timeless and pure. Together they constitute a continuous and logical train of thought that arouses my interest and in general my admiring assent and leaves a lasting impression upon my inner life. Let us call this second form of knowledge *ideational,* meaning by this that it conveys an ordered system of ideas whose truth and value I am bound to weigh and adjudge as belonging to the realm of value-knowledge and as affecting my own well-being and that of my fellows through me.

(3) A third kind of knowledge which I gain in reading this ever vitalizing volume has to do more directly with the author himself. All the time I am reading, there is present in my mind the consciousness that these words and ideas are not impersonal, nor do they merely possess personal quality in general, but through them I am in touch with the exceedingly forceful and attractive personality of Plato. This is *his* thought—"the precious life-blood of a master spirit." He and I come into a certain very real personal con-

tact through this, his resurrection body, so to speak. Space and time are thus annihilated. It is as if the words were those of one still living, so fresh and vital is their message. Nor is it Plato alone that is present in this personal interchange. Socrates is here, also. His mind is acting upon that of Plato and through Plato upon me. This is a personal interview, so to speak, in which I am allowed to share with two of the greatest minds of all time their deepest thoughts and aspirations.

Manifestly this knowledge is distinctly *personal*. It is the knowledge by one person of another. True, it would be impossible without the book itself and its ideas. It requires, as prerequisites, the first and second kinds of knowledge. Yet I can "bracket" these and come into direct contact with Plato himself personally—feel the lift of his spirit, the playfulness of his humor, the profundity of his reflections, the moral integrity which permeates all his thoughts and words.

II

Here, then, are three kinds of knowledge, all present, in differing forms and degrees, as I read—perceptual-conceptual (the book), ideational (the thoughts), and personal (Plato). Specific terms for the first two of these forms of knowledge we may gain from Plato himself who in the *Republic* and elsewhere outlines his general theory of knowledge. The first kind of knowledge—that of objects, or phenomena—he somewhat scornfully terms *doxa,* usually translated (quite

inadequately) *opinion.*[1] Those whose minds are confined to this kind of knowledge Plato calls *philodoxical,* lovers of surface knowledge. He pronounces such minds acute and observant but scatter-brained. They "have an eye for a multitude of beautiful objects, but can neither see beauty in itself, nor follow those who would lead them to it—they behold a number of just things, but not justice in itself, and so in every instance, we shall say they have in every case an opinion, but no real knowledge of the things about which they opine." For, to quote from *Timæus,* "that which is conceived by opinion and with the help of sensation and without reason is always in the process of becoming and perishing and never really is."

The higher kind of knowledge, which has to do with unchanging forms, universals, eternal ideas, Plato terms *epistemé* (*reason*). This kind of knowledge alone he holds to be knowledge of the *real.* Those who cherish it he regards as alone entitled to be called true philosophers, such as all qualified and cultivated men should be. Such knowledge is acquired, Plato thinks, by a kind of vision, or intuition (*noesis*), in a state which may be termed pure or pre-existent, in which the soul has risen above the temporal into the eternal and beheld changeless realities. In Kantian terms this knowledge is *a priori.* Its principles are structural in the mind itself, rather than independent and self-subsistent. Kantianism would of course make this knowledge primarily subjective, reaching phenomena, and indeed noumena also,

[1] A. E. Taylor translates *doxa* "belief" or "judgment." But it may be doubted if either of these terms is adequate unless one prefixes some word to show that this belief, or judgment, has to do with outer things only.

only through its own constitutive nature rather than by a direct knowledge of real and valid entities.

It can hardly be questioned that the recognition of that which the mind itself brings to knowledge, upon which philosophical Idealism has insisted so implacably, lets one more deeply into the real nature of knowing. But the extreme intellectual pallidness of Idealism has of late been strenuously, and I think successfully, challenged. Philosophy has been turning toward a Critical Realism which would recover the Platonic ideas, not however as pure forms, but (1) as intrinsic values and (2) "eternal objects" or "essences." This new Realism thus opens the way into a less transcendental, but larger and more comprehensive ontology than that of Plato, without losing the essential truth of Platonism.[2]

III

But what of the third kind of knowledge—that which we have called personal? Of this, as such, Plato makes no adequate mention nor recognition. Its full significance seems to have been withheld from even his far-reaching vision, not of course essentially, but as far as specific recognition is concerned. Plato assumes the existence of persons, and the knowledge of them, and implicitly evaluates personality very highly, but he does not give it explicit recognition other than ethical.

To find the most definite and meaningful appreciation of this kind of knowledge we must go, I take it, to a literature

[2] Whitehead's *Philosophy of Organism* may be cited as an example. *Cf. Process and reality*, pp. 63 ff.

in which it appears in the foreground as the very consummation of all knowledge—*i.e.*, the New Testament. The term there employed for such knowledge, gnosis (*insight*), is one which cannot well be segregated for this usage, because it is used throughout philosophical and religious literature not so much for personal knowledge as for a type of knowledge which is Neo-Platonic rather than Platonic, *i.e.*, a contemplative absorption into abstract undifferentiated Being. The great absolutistic philosophies conceive the profoundest of all knowledge as having to do with the ineffable, transcendental Reality instead of with definite Personal Being, like the God of the New Testament.

It is of the utmost concern, then, for our purpose, to detach the term *gnosis* from its indefinite, speculative meaning and hold it firmly to the more personal spiritual intention which it has in Johannine and Pauline literature.[3]

IV

The term *gnosis* is used in the New Testament, to be sure, quite generally, of knowledge in various of its aspects, but it takes on a more intimate and searching intention when it has to do with the knowledge of personal, or spiritual, entities and values. Something of the full scope and meaning of this kind of knowledge appears in such assertions as the following: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou

[3] I am not, of course, maintaining that the verb gignosco in the New Testament has any specifically personal meaning, in itself, apart from that imparted to it by the affirmations in which it occurs. There is no *theory* of knowledge in the New Testament, except as it is implied, not stated.

has sent" [4]; "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" [5]; "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." [6]

In declarations like these one gets a sense of the intensely vital and transforming nature and effects of personal or spiritual knowledge. It becomes the very essence and end of knowing. To have it is to live in a realm of spiritual or personal reality, which means "eternal life" in the sense of "the abundant life." So far from being purely analytical, or cognitive, or intellectual, such knowledge is both vital and affectional. It is often identified, or at least closely associated, with *love,* regarded as a pure and unselfish spiritual emotion. Personal knowledge at its highest, that is, has a mystical quality—not that of self-annihilating Oriental or Neo-Platonic mysticism but that of conscious and personal Christian mysticism. Yet in its more elemental and general character personal knowledge is by no means confined to mystical states or experiences of peculiar intimacy. It includes, in fact, that every-day universally diffused knowledge of, and contact with, persons by which we live.

V

Personal knowledge as such, essential and vital as it is, has never won more than a limited, and in the main, somewhat grudging recognition from philosophy. It has either

[4] John 17:3.
[5] I Cor. 8:2.
[6] I Cor. 13:12b.

been taken up into, and lost sight of in, an esoteric transcendental knowledge which has little of personal quality—as in all forms of monistic speculation—or it has been simply assumed as commonplace and without special meaning, relegated to a secondary place as parenthetical, marginal, and of little concern in comparison with knowledge that has to do with the external world and its objects.

It is generally assumed that the knowledge we have of each other as physical beings is the main thing and whatever knowledge we may have of one another as invisible, intangible persons is secondary, ephemeral, inferential. A little reflection shows how superficial this is. Our knowledge of each other is not only direct and convincing but of supreme concern. It takes place through physical forms of expression, but in its essential nature it transcends these.

We require some medium through which to communicate with one another, but how insignificant in itself this may be! It is of as slight consequence relatively as the conductor of the electric current to the current itself. A mere alphabetical code, *e.g.*, scratches of ink upon a white surface, may serve as the vinculum of continent-separated persons who by this means come closer to one another than those who touch elbows in a crowd yet remain personal strangers, separated by oceans wider than any that can part friends or lovers.

No form of knowledge proves, upon examination, to be so clear, so real, so replete with meaning and significance, as that by which one person knows another. The subject-object relation is secondary and superficial (however needful)

as compared with the subject-subject or ego-alter relation. Here is the very core and essence of knowledge—our knowledge of ourselves and of other persons. The fact that this personal knowledge is mediated by the senses does not, I reiterate, affect its character as being superior to its instrumentalities. For the knowledge itself is that of like-knowing-like, of "I"-thou, of spirit-to-spirit, as contrasted with mind knowing something other than itself in an objective world.

VI

How may this personal knowledge be rightly estimated relatively to the knowledge of things about us? India has an ancient and characteristic term for the external world which the West has always regarded with suspicion and dislike as indicating a distorted or enervated mental outlook. I refer to the term *Maya*. As an expression of the extreme other-worldliness of the Indian mind, Maya has an eerie and abnormal aspect which the healthy mind naturally rejects. Yet maturity of experience and reflection finds much of meaning in it, as far as it alters the crude objectiveness of Common-Sense Realism and recognizes that the external world is relatively far less real than the persons who experience it and the ideas through which they interpret it. The trouble with Maya is that it makes the self, as well as objects, unreal also.

As reflection grows the realm of Plato's *doxa*—knowledge of and about phenomena—comes to occupy a place of less and less prominence, although it is the realm of *facts* (includ-

ing "stocks and bonds and other solid unrealities," as Hawthorne called them) and of energism, "events," electrons, cells, neurones, and the whole paraphernalia of science, *i.e.*, the world of description and explanation. Real? Yes, of course, this knowledge of the external world is real, very real in its own place and order. But after all it is *relative* to minds, to selves, to persons.

It is foolish, *e.g.*, to question the reality of disease and pain. It is frightfully real when rebellious cells in one's body form a cancer, or diseased neurones in the nervous system produce insanity. But why? Because disease and pain affect the organism *belonging to one who is more real than the organism, i.e.*, the self whose it is. Very real, in a way, is the dissolution of a dead human body. Yet not very real to him whose it once was, wherever he is, or is not. The doctrine of relativity is disturbing until one gets his personal bearings. Then it becomes reassuring.[7]

Standards and conventions of behavior also—the externally pleasing and correct styles and fashions and formulas and ways of doing things—these more or less orderly and useful forms of knowledge and conduct possess a certain kind of reality; but divorced from personality they would have no meaning, no permanence, no inherent and substantial worth. This is the realm of the Heraclitean perpetual flux—the realm of "becoming and perishing" which Plato contrasts with

[7] "Relativity consists in analyzing out certain consequences of the Leibnizian doctrine that every percipient mirrors the universal from its own standpoint." James Ward, *Essays in Philosophical Idealism*, p. 308. Einstein's spatial or gravitational relativity supplies the clue to the larger philosophical relativity.

being—the world of circumstances, of appearances, of universal change. Although it makes up the great bulk of our daily existence and occupation this realm of interest and "opinion" is of only transitory and secondary reality. It gains its meaning from personality. It is as necessary as a man's house is to his home; but only in the same way. A house has value-reality chiefly because it shelters and serves a home. So also with the body as related to the self.

VII

One should not hastily conclude, however, that because the knowledge of persons is so much more real and important than knowledge of things that they too are not real. In fact one of the most striking facts about this whole paradoxical existence of ours is that in the degree in which *personality* becomes real—you and I and our fellows and those who have gone before us and will follow us and the Supreme Person—to that degree the world of sense objects and events, our entire environment, the universe itself becomes real with a new and otherwise unrealizable kind of reality.

On the other hand, if these personalities of ours become disintegrated and decadent, and personal and social relations become false and discordant, the whole external world becomes both mean and meaningless. What is needed, that is, to make the world, and all things in it significant, and thus truly real, is a more vivid consciousness of personal values and relations. Instead of the world of flat surfaces, of sensuous immediacy, of rank realism, of pure objectivity, which

in spite of its deceptive superficial obtrusiveness is so secondary, and may become so "ghastly and dead at heart," there enters, with the heightened sense of personal reality, a new understanding of nature as related to spirit, of circumstances, and events as related to values, so that all objects and events fall into perspective and are capable of just evaluation and true use.

VIII

Knowledge of the Personal Realm, nevertheless, cannot be made to stop short with the human persons with whom we have hitherto been dealing. It carries us a long step farther than we have gone thus far. For when personal knowledge is given its full meaning and value, it becomes increasingly evident that it includes, for its completion, knowledge of a Supreme Person.[8]

Knowledge of this Person is not to be looked for primarily as the result of logical process, or inference, or probability, or of any sort of theoretic conclusion (although these may come in to amplify and confirm it), but rather (as will be pointed out more at length farther on) direct personal knowledge, such as we have of one another, only on a higher level. If such knowledge exists it will not be cold, or "exanimate," or impersonal, but vital and warm and filled with quiet emotion such as accompanies the best personal relationships.

Professor C. I. Lewis has discerningly written: "Insight

[8] I am here anticipating what will be given more careful consideration in Chapter VI.

into the true nature of a reality which is independent of me—which has more than a 'for me' character—is possible only if that nature is spiritual." [9] That the nature of a Divine Personality is spiritual goes without saying. Indeed such a Being is so purely spiritual that this constitutes at once the ease and the difficulty of knowing Him. The ease, because such knowledge is clear and unimpeded by transactional media, the difficulty, because it requires that "spiritual mind" which is attained only by inner discipline and elevation to the level at which such knowledge becomes vital. Commerce with the Supreme Person thus becomes an acquisition of faith, of that spiritual outreach which makes knowledge of this kind an achievement, though grounded in a fundamental relationship.

IX

We of this age are faced with crucial decisions as to the meaning and value of the world, of life, and of ourselves, such as no other generation has had to confront. We have released gigantic physical *genii,* constructed mechanisms of terrific power, unloosed forces within ourselves fraught with enormous potencies, both constructive and destructive. We must either master and direct all these or succumb to them. We must either conclude that they are the great reality, and knowledge of them the chief desideratum, or we must find some higher reality that exceeds them and some deeper

[9] *Mind and the World Order,* p. 410. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

knowledge that excels the knowledge of them, by reference to which to estimate and employ them.

Either the cosmos, including our own psychophysical organism, is too mighty for us and will capture and enslave and ultimately crush us, or we must learn some hidden lore that will rob life both of its terror and its temptations and enable us to live and die superior to the physical order of which we are part. This cannot be accomplished by merely harnessing the titanic forces about us and the impulses within us and compelling them to serve our physical and temporal ends, although that is part of the process. It must be another kind of mastery and another form of knowledge that will render us victorious over our world and ourselves.

Knowledge of this higher personal realm is no new and strange thing. It has always existed in human consciousness, however dimly. For "we are plants not of earth but heaven and from the same source from which the soul arose . . . a divine nature directs our whole corporeal frame." [10] Hence comes the knowledge which we have been considering, of that which is above Nature, because it is inherently prior to Nature and regnant over her, *i.e.*, the Personal Order.

[10] Plato, *Timæus*, (71).

III

Personality in Christianity

CHRISTIANITY is not a philosophy but a religion. As such its nature is experiental, not philosophical. Very definite and positive philosophical principles underlie and transfuse it; yet it would be captious and philosophically provincial to attempt to identify Christianity with any particular philosophy. No doubt it would be truer to say that it is related to, and fulfills the deepest truths in, every great philosophy. Nevertheless it can hardly be gainsaid that Christianity has closer and more complete affiliations with Personalism than with any other philosophy.[1] Its theory, as well as its very life, is bound up with the emphasis upon the person and personal values, as related to man and God.[2]

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[1] The following characterization of Christianity by an eminent British theologian has (since writing the above) come to my attention. "A philosophy," he terms Christianity, "which might be described as *Personalism,* because it makes central the conception of personality, as developed in a reflective and not merely observational psychology." Principal A. E. Garvie, *The Expository Times,* June, 1933, p. 398.

[2] I do not intend to imply that the New Testament conception of God can be circumscribed by the term *Personality* but that no other concept expresses it so fully. *Cf.* the writer's *The Humanity of God,* Chapter IV.

I

The New Faith began as a personality-centered religion. It was a message burning with personal conviction, calling individuals to faith and conduct in the light of their relationship to a personal God and to their fellow men. *It is not too much to say that Jesus initiated a new attitude toward persons, an epochal evaluation of personality.* The person as member of the tribe, as dear to kin, as friend, and as a legal unit, had been previously appraised at somewhat of his true worth, but *the person as person*—whether friend or enemy, freeman or slave, countryman or stranger—began to be distinctly understood and valued only with the advent of Christianity.[3] "The mon's a mon for a' that and a' that" is a distinctly Christian sentiment, and in putting it thus clearly and truly Robbie Burns had "the mind of Christ."

By means of this personal character and emphasis Christianity won its victory. It came to an age weary of institutionalism and the degradation of personal values and longing for the recognition of the freedom and worth of the individual. It met that longing more fully than any other religion. It dealt, not primarily with form, ritual, cult, or rules of conduct, but with the individual as a free, worthful person in relation with other persons and with a personal God.

II

Not only did Christian experience center here but Christian theology also. Theology began with an inquiry which

[3] This is not to disparage the *social* character and message of the Gospel. Indeed the personal gospel requires the social gospel to complete it.

really involved the whole problem of personality. Its first stimulating, and still far from completely answered, query was: *Who is Jesus Christ?* [4] It was an unfathomable question. Deeper and deeper it drew the Christian mind into the nature of personality, human and divine, and thus to the formulation of the doctrines of Incarnation and the Trinity. No wonder, perhaps, that at length theology became well-nigh buried under the problems it had amassed and the theories it had evolved, losing the sense of the reality of the personal Christ and the personal God in speculation and controversy about them. Nevertheless there were great issues involved, issues that needed to be met lest Christianity be lost in Gnostic philosophy or forgotten as a negligible cult fit only for the unthinking masses. It was indeed for them, but also for the truth-seekers.

This marked emphasis upon the *person,* in Christian life and doctrine, though often subsequently lost sight of, persisted.[5] It continued, in other forms, beyond the Greek theology. In the stress upon *sin* and *grace* in Latin theology, upon *faith* in the Reformation theology, upon *love* in the mystical theology, upon *personal surrender* in the evangelical

[4] This question, as it relates to personality, will be discussed in Chapter VI.

[5] Professor Whitehead in his *Adventures of Ideas* (The Macmillan Co., 1933) attributes this elevation of the person as such to the cooperative influence of religion and philosophy. "For two thousand years philosophy and religion had held up before Western Europe the ideal of man, as man, and had claimed for it a supreme worth," (p. 47). By "religion," doubtless he means *Christianity* and by "philosophy" the Platonic ideal of man so closely associated with it. Emphasis upon personality in Greek theology is well illustrated by Origen, of whom Windelband writes: "Thus will, and *the relations of personalities to one another,* in particular that of the finite to the infinite personality, are recognized as the ultimate and deepest meaning of all reality." *A History of Philosophy,* II, 2, §20.

theology, upon *the will* in New England theology, upon the *consciousness of dependence* in Schleiermacher, upon the *worth-judgment* in Ritchlianism, and upon *experience* at the present time, are to be found reaffirmations, in varied forms, of the personal principle in its relation to Christian life and thought.

When we ask why it is that Christianity is so closely bound up with the evaluation of personality, both in doctrine and in life, we can hardly stop short of the conclusion that it is because the two constituent elements of ultimate reality —truth and value—both find their fulfilment in the realm of the personal.

III

Christianity, so far as it has been true to itself,[6] has deeply realized and in its own way taught that the profoundest truth, truth that is both elemental and final, has to do with personal realities and relationships.

Here lies a partial rupture between Christianity and modern philosophy. For while the personal bearing of truth has, to a large degree, entered into modern philosophy, personality, as such, has never come to full recognition. The pantheism rather than the ethicism of Spinoza, the dualism and mechanism rather than the initial personalism of Descartes, the pluralistic rather than the personal bearing of the

[6] It is necessary to distinguish between *pure* Christianity and *actual* Christianity, as it has been deflected from its own nature and principles in the course of its development. In that development there may be detected two processes, one of genuine progressive unfolding, the other influenced by "the brood and hatch of time," in which the pressure arising from lower motives and accommodating considerations has corrupted original Christianity.

monadology of Leibniz, the critical rather than the constructive contribution of Kant, the intellectualism rather than the spiritualism of Hegel, the pessimism rather than the voluntarism of Schopenhauer, the materialism rather than the idealism (and theism) of British thought,[7] the empiricism rather than the intuitionism of French philosophy, have been uppermost. "The actual history of philosophic thought," as Professor Howison has said, "even after philosophy attains to the view that rational consciousness is the first principle, exhibits a singular arrest of the movement toward putting complete personality at the center of things. Historic Idealism is, in fact, far from being personal, rather is it well-nigh overwhelmingly impersonal." [8]

IV

The first decade of our century witnessed a growing revolt against the two dominant philosophies of the later nineteenth century, Materialistic Naturalism on the one hand and Absolute Idealism on the other. The rise of Pragmatism, with its insistence upon practical ends, followed by Neo-Realism and the Value Philosophy, with their challenge to mere intellectualism, were indications that the mind of the time was bent upon gaining a firmer hold upon a sufficing reality. More significant still were the spiritual

[7] Professor J. H. Muirhead has performed the valuable service of restoring the balance as respects British and American philosophy in his *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1931), and his *Coleridge as Philosopher* (same publisher, 1930).

[8] *The Limits of Evolution*, Second Edition, Preface, p. viii. The Macmillan Co., 1904. The discussion here takes up again the subject of personal knowledge introduced in the preceding chapter.

Activism of Eucken and the Intuitionism of Bergson. Not that those who live upon, and by truth, without formulating it, did not possess vital truth, outside of the pale of philosophical speculation, before modern philosophy awoke to the fuller meaning of spiritual reality. It would be a sorry thing if the living hold upon truth were not stronger than the power of theory to interpret it. Men have always fed upon truth, thinking it was their theories of it that nourished them. Yet theory matters, too, and that vitally.

Eucken and Bergson, though differing greatly and neither of them nominal personalists, greatly furthered a higher evaluation of personality.[9] The response they aroused revealed the widespread desire for a philosophy nearer to life and its moral and spiritual issues than those then prevailing. Of the close relation of Eucken to the personalistic and Christian point of view there can be no doubt.[10] Although the war well-nigh shattered his influence for a time it survives as a permanent emphasis upon spiritual reality—an emphasis which has been creatively continued and enlarged by Nikolai Hartmann in his notable work, *Das Problem des geistigen Seins* (Berlin, 1933).[11]

[9] In America, *Personalism* began its more distinct career as a philosophy with the century. In 1901, George H. Howison published his challenging volume, *The Limits of Evolution*, dedicated to "all who feel a deep concern for the dignity of the soul." Borden Parker Bowne published his widely influential *Personalism* in 1907. These two productive and independent thinkers did not realize how much their philosophies had in common. This could only appear in the light of the subsequent development of Personalism.

[10] "I, too," wrote Eucken to Howison, after reading the latter's *The Limits of Evolution*, "stand fully and without reserve on the platform of Personal Idealism." *George Holmes Howison, Philosopher and Teacher*, p. 120.

[11] Reviewed at length by Professor Helmuth Pleszner in *Kant-Studien*, Band XXXVIII, Heft ¾. Berlin, 1933.

V

The chief service of Bergson has lain in the fresh and convincing way in which he reinstated intuition—which is so vital a presupposition both in Christianity and in Personalism—in its true place. Very clearly and cogently he pointed out, in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1912), how impossible it is to know a thing merely by looking at it through the medium of certain concepts, from the outside. It requires the inside view of intellectual sympathy in order to know.

> Either there is no knowledge possible, and all knowledge of things is a practical knowledge aimed at the profit to be drawn from them, or else philosophy consists in placing oneself within the object itself by an effort of intuition.[12]

This emphasis upon an *intuitive empathy* was, of course, only a recovery upon another ground of the central conviction of all the great intuitive philosophies, Oriental and Occidental—affirmed by such thinkers as Laotze, and the author of the *Bhagavad Gita,* Socrates and Plato, Origen and Augustine, Pascal and Cousin, Jacobi and Schleiermacher, Coleridge and Carlyle, Edwards and Emerson. Intuition has in fact never lacked its potent representatives, philosophical and religious; but it had suffered eclipse in our analytic and science-dominated time and was in great need of re-emphasis.

[12] *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* p. 43. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1912.

Bergson not only restored this emphasis but gave intuition a new range of application; for, as he pointed out, "science and metaphysics come together in intuition." [13] Yet the kind of intuition upon which he first threw emphasis belongs to a realm below that of the finest and most significant inner life. In his great work, *Les deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion* (Paris, Librairie Félix Alcan, 1932), he has completed his philosophy by carrying it forward to its full religious implications as realized in mysticism.[14] In this work he presents the mystical experience, especially as found in Christian mysticism, as creative in character and thus as the essential truth-discoverer. Creation is both Divine and human. It is "an undertaking of God to create creators and to enlist the assistance of beings worthy of his love." [15]

VI

Personal (or spiritual) truth known intuitively: this principle has always been basal in Christianity. It needs logical

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[14] *Cf.* "M. Bergson's New Work on Morals and Religion," by Professor J. H. Muirhead, *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1932. This new development of Bergson's philosophy has led the editor of *The Personalist* (not without reason), to term him a *personalist.* (*Cf.* "Bergson and Personalism," *The Personalist,* April, 1933). However he is to be classified philosophically, Bergson has shown the intimacy of relationship between Intuitionism and Personalism as no other modern philosopher has done.

[15] In his still more recent work *La Pensée et Le Mouvant* (Félix Alcan, Paris, 1934), Bergson has further, and very illuminatingly (especially in Chapters II and IV), described the nature and processes of Intuition as a spiritual and personal form of knowledge. "C'est la vision directe de l'esprit par l'esprit, . . . Intuition signifie donc d'abord conscience, mais conscience immédiate, vision qui se distingue à peine de l'object vu, connaissance qui est contact et même coïncidence," pp. 35, 36.

validation, but the validation is secondary and subordinate. As Fichte affirmed, "Knowledge is not reality, for the very reason that that it is knowledge." Spiritual intuition is, however, by no means mere feeling. It is deeply rational; it is, as Coleridge defined Reason, "an inner beholding"; it is Pascal's cognizing "heart" having "reasons of its own"; it is Tennyson's protesting "heart" rising up in wrath at the voice, "Believe no more," to answer, "I have felt." But can "feeling," even of this kind, be trusted? Yes, for *truth-feeling* is cognitive and knows intuitively the truth it feels. This truth is not merely subjective in nature, however difficult to define conceptually. Its appeal reaches every mind that is not closed to it. It is both personal and spiritual. For the spiritual realm is the personal realm; and knowledge acquired by intuition is as rational as it is mystical.[16] That by personal intuition the self knows not only itself and others but God directly, is implied in Christianity, though not peculiar to it.[17]

It is a singular deficiency in philosophy that it has so largely failed to recognize this [18] primary and incontrovertible

[16] Professor Montague, in his Carus lectures, advocates "Philosophy as Vision," but unless Vision is a vision of Reality, however dim and imperfect, Philosophy is robbed both of zest and meaning. *Cf. Mysticism and Modern Life*, Chapter V.

[17] By directly is not meant without a physical medium, but the medium is incidental. We touch each other personally *through* it, just as our bodies meet in the medium of the atmosphere. Nor is it meant, of course, that our knowledge of each other is not a matter of growth, subject to constant enlargement and revision. But the *existence* of others, as selves, and something *of* them as such we know directly.

[18] This subject is meeting with more attention in recent philosophical discussion. (See, *e.g.*, *Mind*, April, 1921). Chapter VII of my volume *Personality and Psychology* is devoted to this topic.

form of knowledge—intuitive personal recognition. Philosophy has grounded the knowledge we have of each other, in the main, upon inference from the behavior of another (in the light of one's own self-consciousness) to the existence of that other.

Canon Rashdall, for example, following the general philosophic tradition, wrote: "Most uncultivated persons would probably be very much surprised to hear that the existence of the friend with whose body they are in physical contact is after all only an inference"; and again: "It is from the existence of my own self that I infer the existence of other selves, whom I observe to behave in a manner resembling my own behavior." [19]

Assigning our knowledge of others to inferential reasoning is a singular fusion of solipsism and rationalism. There could be no "I" without a "thou." The *self* and the *other* are "compresent" in personal reciprocity.[20] We are more real to one another than the world of the "not-self," in which we live, is to us. For the external world has the kind of reality it has because of minds. *Persons are the true reals.* Religion, as well as morality, rests upon this principle. Christianity has always been deeply aware of this, but without

[19] *Philosophy and Religion,* pp. 110, 111. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910. W. T. Stace, in his *The Theory of Knowledge and Existence* (The Oxford Press, 1932), asserts: "Whatever be the degree of probability which attaches to the reasoning by which we justify our belief in the existence of other minds, it is at any rate a genuine *inference.*" (p. 197.) *The Philosophical Review,* Vol. XLIII, 3, p. 316.

[20] Samuel Alexander, in *Space, Time, and Deity,* has come much nearer to the solution of the problem by assigning our knowledge of one another to "the experience of sociality," but he connects this too closely with animal gregariousness to account for personal relationships.

realizing all that it means, theoretically, and all that there is to support it philosophically.[21]

VII

The second reason, already anticipated, why personality is so central in Christianity is that in the Christian attitude toward life the person has that high, self-attesting form of reality—*worth*.

A thing is real according to its intrinsic worth. Measured thus, the ultimate reality is the person. In other words personality is *the thing*. That little word "thing" to which there has been given so objective a meaning, in earlier and more sagacious usage was closely linked with personal worth. A "thing," in the original sense, was something of "personal" value—a jewel, a home, a cause—dear to a person. The word was used also of a collective group of persons, as the parliament of Norway was called the "ting." Thinghood thus implicitly and rightly means personal (and hence also social) value-reality. It is our sophistication, our *intellectualisis* (to coin a word) which has led us to make more of forms, essences, and categories (which to be sure have their own subordinate kind and degree of reality) than of

[21] Since writing as above, the following suggestive words of Edmond Holmes have come to my attention. "If we would learn to distinguish reality from illusion, or, with a finer discrimination, to distinguish between the different degrees of reality, we must try, by living to the spirit, to make ourselves more and ever more real. Each gain in the reality of one's own spirit is a gain in the power of guessing the secrets and sounding the depths of the Real. He who has *lived* his way—the way of self-loss and self-transcendence—into the heart of Reality is 'the master of those who know.' " *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1932, p. 140.

ourselves and thus to create an atmosphere in which the "native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

It is by means of this over-emphasis upon intellectual processes and forms that "we have first raised a dust and complain we cannot see," as Bishop Berkeley puts it in his vigorous philippic against abstraction in the *Introduction to the Principles of Human Knowledge,* in which he declares that, "of all the false principles that have obtained in the world, none, methinks, hath a more wide and extended sway over the thoughts of speculative men than this of abstract general ideas." [22] What Berkeley was really seeking to establish in all of his philosophical works, was the reality of the Divine Mind and of the intercommunion of this Mind with human minds.[23] He was the most ardent of theists. Both percepts (as he recognized) and concepts assume their true place and their subordinate but genuine reality only when they are seen as the *media* by which minds organize their experience, develop their capacities and have communication with one another and with the Supreme Mind. This can be done, however, by no merely arbitrary or artificial sign-language. It is primarily by direct, personal, spiritual intercourse.

[22] §17. This I take to be a protest against the empty, or abstract, universal, not against the "concrete universal."

[23] *e.g.*, "There is an *omnipresent external Mind*, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner, and according to such rules, as He Himself hath ordained and are by us termed the *laws of Nature.*" *Three Dialogues.*

VIII

But is not this thoroughgoing Personalism really *subjectivism,* it will be asked, very agreeable to human self-complacency but wholly out of keeping with cosmic realities, and quite at odds with facts as we find them? Is not the first step to true knowledge humble and patient effort to understand the facts of the universe "just as they are," keeping out of our own light as far as possible? Make man the measure of all things (it is said) and you confine him to himself and thus close the path of progress. Science has won its triumphs by turning away from sickly introspection and spiritual fancies to the outer world with its majestic laws, its heedless uniformities, its rich rewards for investigation, and its promises of unlimited advancement in knowledge and in power.

How shall we answer? By granting at once, not with hesitation or pusillanimity but with genuine hospitality, the truth and value (in its own frame of reference) of scientific truth, and the reality (of its own order and kind) of the external world, as seen through the system of concepts and relations which science has evolved. The world is no illusion, nor scrap-heap of blind and brutal chance forces, but a vast and inexhaustible realm of truth and meaning and a storehouse of riches not only for the body but also for the mind and soul.

Yet this reality and this value exist only through and for mind and spirit; in a word, for persons. The invaluable

sense of intrinsic values, so central in Christianity, "first things first," is the sole principle that will secure the harmony, theoretical and practical, of our total universe. The only adequate orientation of life is that which finds in personality the fundamental principle of determination of all directions and dimensions, of all standards and theories, of all aims and pursuits, of all realities and values.

"The man's the gowd for a' that."

IX

The supreme evaluation of man, as over against nature, maintained by Christianity, is the convincing evidence of its personalizing character. To this evaluation, with which modern science has often seemed to conflict, there is reason to think we are now returning.[24] Only thus can a true appreciation of nature herself be gained. A just and discerning Personalism is not only the worthiest approach to a true understanding of man but also to a true and vital understanding of nature and fellowship with her. How little have we begun to realize, how slightly has yet taken hold of our imagination, the fact of our close kinship with the cosmos, reaching back through all the long aeonic movement of ascending forms of "matter" and of life, linking us by living ties to our fellow-creatures and to all the formative powers and processes of this marvelous maelstrom

[24] *Cf.* "The Passing of the Scientific Era," by the present writer. *The Century Magazine*, August, 1929.

of creative forces! Out of it all personality has emerged as the butterfly from the chrysalis, as the bird from the shell.

On the physical side of our nature we are part and product of all below us. On the higher side of our being we are of another air and world, with wings and freedom, and the range of spiritual space. And yet we may not look down upon our shadow-house with contempt. Our very wings were fashioned in this dark matrix, though the power of flight comes from elsewhere. However closely we are related to nature

> "Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
> And every phase of ever-heightening life,"

still, as persons, we transcend our cosmic environment and vestiture and cannot conceal from ourselves, nor avoid the obligations imposed by, the qualities and powers of the diviner world to which we belong.

Dressed in homespun cosmic clothing, feeding at the same table, and nourished by the same life-blood as our brothers of field and wood and air, yet the rational and royal within our human nature cannot be ignored, much less eradicated. The honor and rebuke of our spiritual heritage are upon us. "We know we are imperfect, but how do we know it?" asked Emerson. It is the very *imperfection* of personality, judged by its own standards, that attests its divine source and possibilities.

Looked at from the viewpoint of sheer Naturalism it seems an impertinence to make man, this frail, undeveloped child of lowly mothering, exposed to the buffetings of an apparently heedless cosmos, in momentary peril of being crushed

out of existence by titanic forces—this spiritual foundling, this incarnate enigma—the final cause and interpreter of all existence. No wonder such apparent presumption seems at first a foolish affront to the majestic and manifold cosmos of which we are so tiny a part. But wiser thoughts follow. The expansion of the cosmos is witness to the expanding capacities of mind. Having annexed an infinitude of galaxies to our domain, we should live in the dignity of such palatial amplitude. Never do we understand cosmic dimensions so well as when we understand the dimensions of the mind; never do we honor our biological brothers more than when we recognize ourselves as in duty bound to be their superiors. *Noblesse oblige.* It is only thus that we win nature's full allegiance and realize the possibility of true harmony between ourselves and our maternal relatives who share with us her bounties as well as her rigors.

X

Man the developing person, striving toward an ideal that comes from above himself—this is the Christian conception. Nothing less than this is worthy of humanity. Consider the alternative: personality an *epiphenomenon,* the meaningless sport of a blind and purposeless nature. It would be treason to reason itself to accept this as a true account of the incomparably endowed being who alone is self-conscious, who can survey the whole vast sphere of nature, interpret, choose, reject, approve, condemn, evaluate, who can conceive and make real to himself a realm above and beyond nature, recasting in the light of his own being the whole evolutionary

process out of which he has emerged. To imprison personality under the weight of a world which it alone can understand, "machinery, just lent, to give the soul its bent," is rank unreason and self-treason.

The light of the cosmos is the person. If therefore this eye be single the whole body will be full of light, but if it be evil, the whole will be full of darkness. The purely mechanical, biological, and economic interpretations of human life have reached a point of development and have gained a hold upon the mind of our time which, for a great many, threaten the loss of the sense of reality itself. The inner eye is darkened and great is the darkness.

No one would wish to deny the value, in its proper place, of the study of nature or of the psychophysical structure of man. In the end it will contribute to the larger understanding of the person himself and his adaptation of the world in which he develops to his own higher purposes. Yet if, absorbed with our psychophysical instrument and its environment, we lose possession of our heritage in the personal realm, the mess of pottage gained in exchange—however highly seasoned it may be, and served with all the embellishments and accompaniments of modern mental epicureanism—will leave us irremediably impoverished.

Against the lowering of personal values, lest life become "an unweeded garden that grows to seed, possessed by things rank and gross in nature, merely," it behooves all who care for the higher life to maintain the Christian ideal of "the dignity of the soul," the incomparable reality and worth and measureless possibilities of the human person.

IV

The Developing Person

PERSONALITY differentiates into three closely related forms —developmental personality, ideal personality, and perfect personality.

I

In man personality is developmental. He is the developing person. That is his distinctive nature. He "partly is and wholly hopes to be." The potency of an inner urge has made him what he is personally and will make him what he is not as yet.

That which creates this urge and constitutes the ultimate goal toward which he develops cannot be less than Perfect Personality, or rather, the Perfect Person. "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect" is written into the very structure of man as a moral being.

Yet perfection, in its entirety, is too absolute and distant to serve as a concrete goal. It needs to be embodied in an ideal, not too far, nor high, for human nature to strive toward. The ideal is perfection *humanized,* taking on such

distinctness and attractiveness that it is possible for one to reach toward it and become, in some degree, like it. Such an ideal has been becoming increasingly clear and compelling in the soul of man ever since he emerged from the animal—constantly rejected though it has been, dragged in the mire of his passions, thwarted by his rebellions, but always arising again to rebuke and enthrall him. The struggle toward it is the romance of human history and of each individual life.

Christianity conceives the perfection of God to be incarnated in a single incomparable individual life: "And the Logos became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory . . . full of grace and truth." This is "the mystery hid from the ages and generations but now made known" —the open secret of the incarnate ideal become "the light of the world."

II

The three embodiments of personality—in Man, the Ideal Man, and God—will engage our thought in turn. We shall first try to understand something of the significance of the fact that man, individually as well as socially, spiritually as well as in his origin, is so markedly developmental, always passing judgment upon himself from the viewpoint of whether he is moving toward or away from the ideal.

To be able thus to pursue an ideal, manifestly requires that he be a continuous *self.* Such continuous selfhood is attested by the possession of memory and the consciousness of identity as well as the four fundamental qualities: self-

consciousness, reason, freedom, and worth.[1] These are very high and noble powers. They constitute their possessor, as we have seen, a supranatural as well as a natural being, potentially space-binding and time-binding, above the sense-world as well as in it.[2]

There is, to be sure, a way of regarding these potentialities of personality as pure psychological functions, but if this is the case, the self vanishes in a mere succession of mental states. If, on the other hand, selfhood is a reality, self-consciousness must mean not merely the mirroring of the fitful phantasmagoria of sensations and reactions but a consciousness of a true, unitary, continuous ego; reason must be not only the practical intelligence necessary to meet actual "situations" but the power to survey all things *sub specie æternitatis;* and freedom must be not simply the ability to choose between the right-hand road and the left, between this object of desire and that, but freedom to select an ideal and bring oneself in some measure to conform to it.

A casual glance into the content of consciousness seems to render the claim that man possesses such lofty capacities and powers as these nothing but a fanciful, idealistic self-deception. Examine the content of consciousness and what do you find? At first there appears to be only a sorry mental chaos. Individual *psychestration* (to coin a word) is a strange and puzzling medley, made up of impacts from the external world, impulses from the internal senses, images,

[1] A study of the qualities of selfhood may be found in the writer's *Personality and the Christian Ideal* (1909), and in his *Personality and Psychology* (1924).

[2] *The self is not an Ich-in-der-Welt,* as Heidegger holds, but an *Ich-in-der-Welt-und-aus-der-Welt.*

memories, anticipations, choices, the surge of sentiments, the interplay of ideas, the forming of purposes and plans, high thoughts punctured by low suggestions, and what else is not easy to say. But is this all?

III

An analysis of the changing content of one's consciousness for any given ten minutes would disclose an interesting, one might almost say startling, miscellany. Whatever that "divine rag-bag the mind" (as William Dean Howells called it) lacks, it is not variety. A glance into this inner cinema theater is far more instructive and entertaining than the average picture film. In fact the picture film itself is of interest only as it stimulates and incites this inner current of images, ideas, and emotions. Everyone has his own private "movie" theater, operating day and night. Dream life, *e.g.*, which constitutes a unique form of experience, is not only (at times) peculiarly entertaining and picturesque because of the oddity and vividness of its images and ideas, but for that very reason the more puzzling and unaccountable.[3] What do dreams indicate as to the nature of experi-

[3] Last night, for example, after I had delivered a (to me) quite fascinating dream travelogue, a spectral young man said to me: "You *thigs* can make hash out of lightning!" I have pondered long and wonderingly over that enigmatic sentence. What is a *thig?* And as to making hash out of lightning it would be much more reasonable to have lightning make hash of us. But perhaps this was a slur upon the professorial habit of reducing inspiration to commonplace. Not all of my dreams, however, are so cryptic. Often they take me fishing. And such glorious luck! This *is* compensation. I propose to write an article on *Dreams as Recreation* (pure recreation, *pace* the Freudians!), with descriptive material illustrating this unrecognized aspect of dream life, in order to try to salvage some of its values for the benefit of the unappreciative dreamer.

ence? That is a question which has hardly as yet been raised. It is not merely a psychological but a philosophical question. One thing is indicated by dreams, at least, *i.e.*, the creative capacity of imagination, which can, without the aid of immediate sense objects, or directive guidance, evolve such extraordinary scenes and situations and produce such vivid emotions.

What shall we term this restless inner interplay going on within each of us? Professor James' "stream of thought" is hardly adequate, for the reason that there is flotsam and jetsam in the stream which makes much of it hardly worthy to be called thought. Perhaps no better descriptive terms can be found than *the flow of experience,* meaning by experience the ever-changing movement of the mind—embracing the influence of the subconscious upon the conscious mind and including both the "given" and what is contributed by the mind itself.[4]

Within this flow of experience we may distinguish sensations, emotions, images, and ideas. An image is a copy (or mental picture) of a sense impression. An idea may be defined as a mental construct made up of related percepts and concepts, or of concepts alone, organized by reflection.[5]

Whatever its form, an idea is an exercise and evidence

[4] Strictly speaking, the given is inseparable from ideas or essences but it may be theoretically isolated. "There is in all strictness only one given, the Bergsonian real duration or the stream of consciousness." C. I. Lewis, *Mind and the World Order,* p. 58. Scribner's, 1929.

[5] The divergence in the use of the term idea is confusing. Locke, *e.g.*, means by *idea* "the immediate object of perception, thought or understanding." Hume uses *ideas* to mean "the faint images" of impressions, and Berkeley attaches the term to "the objects of sense" since they exist only in the mind.

(even when passively received from another) of the power of the mind to reason, to understand, to relate. Ideas have incalculable influence upon conduct. For example, when Satan in Anatole France's *The Human Tragedy,* derides the simple Franciscan Fra Giovanni for his devotion to Poverty, the latter replies, "The gown of frieze, the cord, the sandals, the wallet, and the wooden bowl are only signs and symbols. The Poverty I love is spiritual, and I address her as Lady, because she is an idea; and all beauty resides in this same idea."

IV

How and why do images, ideas, and memories which do not arise directly from present objects or persons enter the mind? The answer of the older psychology lay in what was termed "the association of ideas." This is only partially adequate. No one who has observed the working of his own mind but must have been struck by the frequent sudden emergence into consciousness of a scene, or a face, or an event, so remote in space and time, and connection, from the main object of his attention that no cause whatever can be discovered for its appearance. The disparity is startling; and yet there must be some connecting web. What causes these *presentations* (to use James Ward's term) to consciousness?

The law of association, operating by means of the two principles of contiguity and similarity, serves as a partial explanation. Sometimes one can readily discover a link connecting the image or idea at present in the mind with a

previous one, but at other times it is quite impossible to do so. How oddly our memories, for example, play hide-and-seek with us! Memories recur in two ways, those which we reach out after and grasp by an effort, and those which flash suddenly into the mind. What accounts for these latter interlopers? We may either assume, in the case of a remote scene or event suddenly arising in consciousness, that there is some subtle connection with what went before in the mind, or that some other mind is acting upon ours, or that something in the subconsciousness causes it to appear.

It seems essential to assume that there is some rhyme or reason in these presentations to consciousness, which we are unable to detect, that saves our mental life from being the mere jumble it often seems. Two trains of thought will sometimes go on in the mind at the same time like trains of cars on parallel tracks, now one, now the other, forging ahead or disappearing in some cut or tunnel, while perhaps the hands or lips are engaged with still another form of activity requiring some degree, at least, of attention.[6] The psychologist tries to give an explanation of all this, but how little does he explain! Who can say the multiplication table,

[6] For example, I have just finished a solitary supper, during which my mind was engaged, in part, with this chapter, while through it were also running the words of a familiar couplet, plans for the next day, and compliments for my wife for preparing for me so excellent a meal. Meanwhile somewhere within the fringes of my consciousness, or co-consciousness, were the objects in the room, the flowers on the table, the tastes of the articles of food, the appropriate manipulation of hands and jaws, accompanied by the entertainment of vocal exercises from a baby next door, sounds from the street, a pleasant co-consciousness from the region of the stomach, the sense of an agreeable coolness after a hot day—and other impressions such as I am unable to recall or catalogue. What a miscellany!—yet not without a certain individual unity due to the self-conscious *ego* holding it together.

or the Lord's Prayer, or sing the national hymn (to say nothing of "The Star Spangled Banner") and keep his mind strictly upon it alone?

So intricate, involved, and often apparently meaningless, is the flow of experience that one is prompted to ask: Has it any real significance? Can it, in any way or degree, be governed?

V

In answer to the first of these queries, it may justly be said, that the flow of experience, in spite of its large admixture of the trivial and the base, is on the whole significant and worth while. It represents, so to speak—as Hegel divined—the universe coming to consciousness, the whole movement of biological and chemical forces breaking through into the light of self-consciousness in man. The instincts which we share with all sentient life and the intelligence wrought out by the animal reveal a purpose beyond themselves. In the light of evolution these are seen to be essential to the development of personality. As they are integrated into selfhood, they take on new and ever enlarging meaning.

Wider and wider becomes the river of human experience, as well as deeper, as the life of the race and of the individual advances. How much broader and richer is the conscious experience of the average individual in civilized than in savage society! How inclusive are his contacts, emotions, ideas! How varied are his thoughts and emotions, how concentric and interwoven his mental patterns! All this enrich-

ment of civilized life takes on significance for each of us personally. An ever-increasing emphasis falls upon the rational and moral *ego* present in the flow of experience observing and evaluating it by means of standards and ideals and thus using it for personal development.

VI

This brings to the fore the question: How far can we exercise control and guidance over the flow of experience? Unless we have some power over it the ability to evaluate it would be of little worth. Without going into a discussion of this vital question, it may be asserted without hesitation that although the stream of experience is so largely determined for each of us by biological, racial, and ancestral factors, and by environment, there is also a limited but very real and significant measure of control and direction of conscious experience within our power. This control is itself an experience—an experience of *freedom*. "If anything can claim to be an experience, choice certainly can." [7] By means of the power of choice it is possible for each of us so far to direct and govern his inner life, as well as his outer actions (and the two cannot be dissevered) as to make a profound and decisive difference to himself and to others.

To what shall I give my attention today, this hour, this moment? What instincts shall I try to inhibit? What motives shall I foster? What form of action shall I engage in? What memories shall I recall? What ideas shall I

[7] John Laird, *Problems of the Self*, p. 125. London, The Macmillan Co., 1917.

cherish? What purposes shall I strengthen? These choices count vitally in the development of personality and count for others as well as for ourselves. The stream of experience flows on, it is true, largely beyond our control. The most we can do is to deflect it here, to dam it there, to slacken or augment its flow, to introduce new tributaries into its current. Yet the effect of our guidance of its course, however partial, suffices to make life practically free, eventful, creative. Even the so-called "slave" of routine toil has some range of choice. His very sticking to his task is a free act, whatever compulsions of consequence conspire to lead him to do so.

Experience, in its apparently meaningless miscellany, is like the sheet which Peter saw let down from heaven, "wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heavens." "Rise, kill, and eat!" is a summons that comes to everyone to take the mastery of this psychological miscellany. As one obeys, it becomes clear to him that the contents of experience are not so common and unclean as he supposed. At any rate he will find amid its confusion of clean and unclean sufficient exercise for his freedom and nutriment for his higher self. Even under the fell blows of circumstance and the sense of inner impotence we are vividly aware of freedom in our acts, and this, as Kant maintained, is sufficient evidence of its reality: "Now I say every being that cannot act except under the idea of freedom is just for that reason in a practical point of view really free." [8] "If thou oughtest, thou canst."

[8] *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Sec. III.

VII

Yet in spite of the consciousness of being free, which is ours momently, it is all too easy to lose faith in the reality of freedom. Doubt of it arises, like a bogy, as soon as reflection begins; and when science enters, and psychology commences its fateful experimentation and inference, the bogy assumes gigantic proportions.

The underlying reason why this uncertainty arises is, of course, because, as a matter of fact, we are in many respects not free. Finding ourselves restricted in many directions, it is easy to conclude that we are bound, hand and foot, mind and will. Yet it requires but a little further reflection to realize that one can be both free and not free, *i.e.,* free in some respects and unfree in others. Many minds balk before this apparent contradiction. The fallacy of *either-or* (applied to the wrong pairs of opposites) lies, like a well-concealed trap, in every man's logical pathway and he is constantly falling into it. One is reminded of the classic debate of the Lime Kiln Club upon the question: Does a house burn up, or does it burn down? Hardly more of pertinence lies in the question: Is man free or determined? It is not a case of either-or, but of "both-and."

When one looks into his own actions and passions he realizes that he is conditioned in at least three respects: (1) psychophysically, *i.e.,* by his heredity and temperament, (2) environmentally, *i.e.,* by "brute facts" and the wills of other selves, and (3) by what may be termed, according to one's viewpoint, "Fate" or "Providence," *i.e.,*

the particular channel in which his life is destined to run, and the length and close of the run.

Yet when one has recognized to the full these limitations, if he deals fairly with experience, he comes to see that, on the other hand, in at least three respects he is undeniably free: (1) in his power of *choice;* for he knows that he constantly faces alternative decisions, and makes them, (2) in his *volition;* for he knows that, so far as his powers allow, he can do the thing he decides to do, and (3) in his *self-direction;* for he can, by pursuing an ideal, shape himself, to some degree, into that which he would become. You can, for example, and know that you can, turn off the radio when the jazz becomes too demoralizing. That is an exercise of choice, volition, and, in a measure, of self-direction.

Professor Hocking holds that freedom appears the moment reflection begins:

> When the self thus observes itself, it is to some extent *detached from what it sees.* A degree of independence is established between the self observing and the self observed; so that what the self judges the self to be is at once true and untrue. Let us say that in the order of nature I am a lazy man. Then I remain a lazy man, thoroughly subject to the causal laws of inheritance or habit, until such time as it may occur to me to observe my own laziness. But let me, in a moment of reflection, recognize this trait, and judge "I am lazy." The judgment is true; yet it is not the whole truth. For I am also a man who observes and criticizes his laziness. This criticism is possible because of some standard, belonging to my hope—some standard of what a man might well be. In this moment of reflection, or self-judgment, the self

> has in its power the beginning of a departure from laziness. Reflection is a beginning of freedom.[9]

Starting thus with *reflection,* we may construct a ladder of freedom, so to speak, resting on experience and raised toward the ideal. Above reflection comes *aspiration,* in which one freely desires to be what as yet he is not; above *aspiration* arises *faith,* which is the free energizing of spirit in the direction of the ideal. Above *faith,* rises the topmost round of the ladder of freedom—*action.* Here, at length, one is quite fully in the atmosphere and exercise of spiritual freedom. As the Apostle James (the Prior Pragmatist and proponent of "the Will to Believe") has it, the true *doer* "looks into the perfect law of liberty" and *continues* therein. Here is the perfection of paradoxes—"the law of liberty." Yet what truth is in it!

The range of one's freedom, compared with his restriction, is comparatively small, but the significance of it is inestimable. For, by the exercise of freedom, within the lambent walls of limitation, is fashioned the character and issue of one's life—whether positive or negative, gain or loss, victory or defeat.

VIII

Directly both freedom and determinism are granted, the question arises: How can these two apparently irreconcilable principles dwell together? What is their relationship? Can they be harmonized?

The reconciling of determinism and freedom has long

[9] *The Self, Its Body and Freedom,* pp. 149-150.

been one of the most baffling enterprises of philosophy; yet difficult as is the problem in theory, it is being solved in practical ways every day by us all. Logically, freedom and determinism are bipolar, *i.e.*, they are *contrapletes* [10]—practically they are present, side by side, in experience. Without the one, the other could not be. Analogies of this correlation appear everywhere. The air offers to the aeronaut both the aid and resistance requisite for flight. The river makes its own banks (and changes them), yet the banks also make the river. The seas which separate continents also afford the pathway between them.

"I will blunt the sword of Fate," cried Beethoven, confronted by his great physical affliction; and out of his victory over fate came those incomparable compositions which, while holding the listener enthralled, release him into the free realm of the spirit. Thus does determinism give direction to freedom, while freedom lends wings to escape fate—if in no other way, then by accepting it. When the Roman judge said to the martyr: "I have power to kill you," he answered: "But I have power to be killed!" Here lies the secret of the harmonization of fate and freedom. It is still more conclusively expressed in the word attributed to Jesus concerning his life: "No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down." [11]

[10] By *contrapletes* is meant two contrasted entities, at opposite poles, which require and fulfill each other—*e.g.*, light, darkness; infinite, finite; transcendence, immanence. For an interpretation of *contrapletion* see "A Broadening Factor in Logic," J. W. Buckham, *The Philosophical Review*, September-October, 1931.

[11] This, of course, involved the freedom to avoid the course of action leading to his arrest and crucifixion.

IX

The incontestable evidence of freedom is creativity; and the evidence of creativity is its products.[12] Man is the creative animal—thereby proving that he is more than animal. Even the savage creates his shelter, his weapons, his utensils; these are the proofs, however crude, of a creative capacity in itself as priceless as it is prophetic. Man conquers his environment, it is true, under compulsion of the necessity of maintaining life. But what impels him to live if not the will to live?

The more man creates, the greater becomes his power to create, and the greater the scope of its exercise. In the lower stages of society creative workmanship is mainly imitative, hereditary, and caste-bound. As civilization advances the individual more and more chooses the form his creative activity shall take. He cooperates (partly by compulsion, partly freely) with his fellows and evolves social structures —towns, cities, industries, public utilities, systems of transportation, commerce, education, governments, nations—a League of Nations. All his creative acts are under conditioning laws, to be sure, but these give to freedom its direction and efficacy.

X

Freedom appropriates as well as creates, and appropriates in order to create. Man lays hold of the external, the past, the distant, the determined, makes these his own and out of

[12] *Cf. Creative Personality,* by R. T. Flewelling. The Macmillan Co., 1926.

them fashions the new, which thus becomes the means and material for further creation. As freedom becomes increasingly resourceful its limitations become not barriers but guideposts. As the builders of a new world-order take up the task of organization—economic, industrial, commercial—the constructive freedom of cooperative "technocracy" [13] will supersede the ruthless freedom of competition. Together free personalities, freely organized, can do the impossible. The creation of a genuine personal-social order awaits only the free and intelligent exercise of cooperative good-will. Within its large domain the individual will find ever larger freedom and incentive for self-realization in creative cooperation with his fellows.

In spite, therefore, of the heterogeneous and confusing nature of experience, reflecting as it does both the natural and the supernatural worlds, and the imperfections and limitations which impede him, man is free, creative, and capable of unlimited progress. His greatness lies in his possibilities. He is the developing person. By his moral reason he apprehends the Ideal, by his self-consciousness he perceives his own relation to it, by his freedom he has power to pursue it. The Ideal is his joy and his salvation. How he may best apprehend it and move toward it is the chief issue of human life. The manner in which Christianity presents and empowers the Ideal will appear in the next chapter.

[13] This term was coined by W. H. Smyth in 1919, for organized industrial and commercial management. (*Cf.* his *Technocracy; Concerning Irascible Strong et al.;* etc.) The later use of the term has robbed it of much of its original and valuable meaning.

V

The Ideal Person

WHY IS it that in the realm of persons, certain possess a moral magnitude, a personal attraction and influence, which makes them incomparably fascinating and fateful? Why do the stars in the personal firmament differ from one another in glory? Why does one here and there beam with so surpassing a radiance that all the rest bow down to it, as in the vision of the Old Testament dreamer?

Such questions cannot be answered in the meager terms of heredity and environment, with which husks a prodigal age is trying to satisfy itself. It is vain to attempt to resolve the personal kingdom into a magnified human experiment station in which personality is to be the product of eugenics. After all the natural factors have been taken into account, there remains that baffling yet luminous enigma, the exceptional person.

Whatever the cause may be, certain it is that in the spiritual firmament there is *one* who shines forth so inherently compelling and majestic and winsome as to be, for ever-increasing multitudes of men and women, the ideal person, the God-

man. It is not too much to say that his is the most puissant and perduring personality amid all the flooding tides of the generations of mankind.

I

Is this person incontestably historical? The question seems all but gratuitous. Whatever the divergencies, in narrative and interpretation, respecting Jesus in the New Testament, whatever the proportions of the ethical and the eschatological, the eternal and the temporal, in His teaching, the strong and the gentle in His character, the personality beneath these outer garments, like the inner tunic woven throughout without seam, is too genuine, too pure and whole to be rent. His stamp upon humanity is too indelible to be expunged. He is by all means "the most subduing and constraining figure in history."

Regarded as a person, *i.e.*, with the emphasis upon Himself rather than details regarding Him, the humble Galilean who came to be called "the Christ" stands out distinct, clear-cut, morally resplendent; more so than if burdened by many biographical details, or devitalized by meticulous efforts at accuracy of description. Has it ever occurred to the reader what cause we have to be grateful that the transmission of the life of Jesus did not fall to the hands of expert reporters and historians? What an empty shell of particulars might be ours in that case! Here in the Gospels is a living portrait, painted with the instinctive skill and original coloring of a receptive, reproductive love; a portrait which, without a liv-

ing personality behind it, would be as impossible as sunshine without a sun.

Only give the word depth and scope enough and "personality" covers it all, explains it all, verifies it all. Even the miracles are coming to have a hitherto unrecognized value from the point of view of personal revelations—whatever may have been the kernel of fact in each—of the power of a great personality to command situations and confer blessings. And if His life has won unfailing confidence His death has moved mankind still more. So that the sinful and hopeless have found healing in

> "The piercèd side of one
> Who died upon an ancient hill
> And left a singing in men's blood
> As in the grass, an old refrain,
> Not all the years had quieted
> That yet [sings]on." [1]

As to the resurrection, it is rapidly coming to be seen as *the epiphany of an imperishable personality* rather than the rising of a body from the grave.[2] The latter may, or may not, have occurred; the former is an indubitable and perpetually creative fact.

II

Just as clearly as this Person is historical, so clearly is He also *superhistorical*. To attempt to confine Him to a definite period of history were as futile as to try to hold back Niagara

[1] Lola Ridge, *Firehead*. New York, Payson and Clarke, 1929.

[2] To the words of John's Christ concerning his life, "I have power to lay it down," are added, "And I have power to take it again."

with a dam of straw. Such a person invades the centuries and pervades the generations. He belongs to man. We of today know Him as well, better in some ways, than His contemporaries. We too may say of Him, "Whom we have seen and our hands have (spiritually) handled of the word of life."

For this is the striking fact about Jesus, as in lesser degree about other great personalities: He enters the temporal order at a definite time and belongs primarily to a distinct generation and environment, but, once in the human world, He refuses to stay within His own birth-to-death period, overleaps the boundaries of His own time, passes on into the generations succeeding and becomes a puissant and invincible personal and social force. Not only does He fit into the historic movement but Himself molds history with peculiar puissance. Thus it has been with every great imperishable personality in proportion to His ethical integrity and spiritual power. Are Confucius, Gautama, Zoroaster, Luther, Washington, Lincoln, *memories* only? Are they not living personalities? No one is really dead so long as he is vitally affecting the conscious life of others.

III

With Jesus Christ, however, the case is so much larger as to call for another category. His impact upon men refuses to be encompassed by any less a word than redemption. *His is the redemptive personality*. Plato thinks deep into the heart of truth, and responsive minds in every generation

since are illumined and uplifted, and thus he still lives on. Gautama Buddha practices self-renunciation and receives enlightenment, and millions to this day follow his example and find peace. Luther nails the theses to the door of the church of Wittenberg and Christendom feels the act, or rather the man, to this hour. Homer, Dante, Shakespeare sing, and generation after generation is hushed to listen. Jesus comes and in increasing numbers through the centuries men are made over, transformed, redeemed.[3] There is nothing strange about this redeeming power. It does not operate magically but naturally, spiritually, ethically. "He will make us finer, nobler men and women," writes a discerning critic, "and there is none other who can do so as can He." [4]

IV

The most significant fact in human experience is the power of the Moral Ideal. In some vital, incomparable way Jesus Christ links Himself with this ineradicable human impulse toward the Ideal. Dissociate Him from this and He would sink back among the minor, scarcely discernible, figures of history—a defeated visionary of a Roman province. But because there is something in Him which appeals, with incomparable force, to that within us which strives toward the

[3] By "redemptive" I do not mean, in any sense, substitutionary, or forensic, or official redemption, but personal, moral, vicarious, spiritual redemption. Christ did not exercise this redemptive power apart from, but only through, the Spirit of God within him. (Indeed, as Paul says, "the Lord is the Spirit" —present in and working through Jesus.) The *Atonement,* interpreted ethically and spiritually, has in it deeper meanings than have ever yet been drawn out.

[4] Robert Keable, *The Atlantic Monthly,* November, 1928.

pure and perfect, therefore He grips individuals, races, and generations with a singularly fascinating and impelling attraction. "One man was true," as Emerson put it, "to the best that is in you and me." In thus being true to the Ideal this man becomes the ideal person, the true archetypal man, and thus relates himself inextricably to us all.

It is because we see in Him that which we would be, as well as that which we feel that God is toward us, that we turn to Jesus Christ with such unsated desire and confidence. It is for this reason that in every new generation men gladly confess,

> "We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
> We test our lives by Thine."

How can the invisible moral Ideal, hidden in the depths of the soul, blend and unite with a single historic character, distant in time, of another race and language, of an environment, education, culture, remote from ours, so that we recognize the lineaments of the Ideal-Man-of-the-Heart mirrored and fulfilled in Him? That is the real miracle. We find ourselves, that is, face to face with the urgent problem: How can the Jesus of History be the Christ of Faith? If He is a mere individual in history, how can Christianity lay claim to universality? And if He is purely and only the Christ of Faith, how can Christianity longer be regarded as a historic religion? In brief, we are confronted with the dilemma: Jesus or Christ?

The answer made to this question in the well-known symposium of *The Hibbert Journal* in 1909, was, in effect:

Jesus or Christ? *Both.* In other words it was a refusal to acknowledge the alternative—a significant result, as far as it went. But it left the underlying problem of the relation of historical to eternal truth in Christianity unsolved.

Since that time the iconoclasm of Wrede, the eschatological extremism of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer, and especially the attempt of Drews, Smith, and others to resolve the Gospel history into myth, have forced the problem into the open and made it one of the leading issues in the effort to understand Christianity.

Out of this controversy, with its copious harvest of able and well-directed replies to the mythical theory, has emerged a reaffirmed but somewhat reduced summary of the knowledge of the life of Jesus. That such an one actually lived and was no myth, that He proclaimed the coming of the New Age, that He taught a living faith in God and a vital righteousness among men,[5] that He was put to death and was believed by His followers to have arisen from the dead—all this is established by a fresh and convincing consensus of modern scholarship.

V

Professor Ernst Troeltsch, approaching the subject from the philosophical side in a significant address at the Berlin Congress of Free Christianity in 1910, declared:

> A Christian mysticism in which every believer feels himself to be a ray emanating from this central fire, where

[5] The form-historical theory of the sayings of Jesus has probably much of truth in it, but in the main the teachings, and for the most part the words themselves, are too clearly stamped with a single creative personality to be other than those of one who spoke neither as the scribes nor as the apostles.

> the followers always bind themselves together afresh in the religious interpretation and veneration of Jesus as the one who lifts us up above ourselves, who is the divine revelation strengthened by the historical process of the centuries—such will always remain the central point of true and genuine Christianity as long as it exists.[6]

Place beside this statement the significant words with which Albert Schweitzer, the brilliant New Testament scholar who is testifying to the reality of his faith on a mission field of the Congo, closes his remarkable volume, *The Quest of the Historical Christ:*

> The names in which men expressed their recognition of Him as such—Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God—have become for us historical parables. We can find no designation which expresses what He is for us. He comes to us as One Unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same words: "Follow thou Me," and sets us to tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands, and to those who obey Him, in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn to know in their own experience who He is.

Whether such a Christ as that is consistent with the hectic visionary described by Schweitzer in the pages preceding, or not, is of comparatively slight importance. The inconsistency is startling. All the greater is the evidence that, after all, the heart and soul of the faith of the scholar, as of the humblest believer—that which binds us all to Christ—

[6] *Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity*, p. 238.

lies beneath all outward conceptions of Him historically in the inner mystical magnetism of the Spirit incarnated in a person.

Thus we are being led, by one way and another, by the decay of an impossible conservatism and by the fruitlessness of an unimpassioned liberalism, to see that the vital power of Christianity is neither an orthodox dogmatic system, nor a historical record, but *a deathless personality enshrining the Eternal Spirit.* "He who is near Me is near the fire." [7] What we need is not mere impersonal principles, for they fail to move us, but a concrete personality to illuminate and vitalize religious faith.

> "What is the point where himself lays stress?
> Does the precept run, 'Believe in good,
> In justice, truth, now understood
> For the first time'?—or 'Believe in me,
> Who lived and died, yet essentially
> Am Lord of Life'? Whoever can take
> The same to his heart and for mere love's sake
> Conceive of the love—that man obtains
> A new truth; no conviction gains
> Of an old one only, made intense
> By a fresh appeal to his faded sense." [8]

Once more the Christ is saying: "It is expedient for you that I go away." For in going away from us as a completely decipherable and accurately described historic individual, he returns as a time-transcending, victorious personality.

[7] Apochryphal saying of Jesus.
[8] Robert Browning, *Christmas Eve.*

VI

We have spoken of the effect which a great personality has in molding history. There is a complementary truth to be placed beside this. Not only does this puissant person mold after-generations, they in turn continually re-interpret, so as to seem almost to reconstruct, him.

Every age, race, century—as well as every man—sees Jesus through the medium and atmosphere of its own mind, its own ideals, its own life. This fact seems at first to come between the soul and Him. When one thinks of the various and contrasted biographies, portraits, studies, and interpretations of Christ given us in literature, more varied and contrasted even than those in art—such contrasts, for example, as that between the Second Gospel and the Fourth Gospel, that of Schleiermacher, and that of Ritschl, that of Mozoomdar, and that of Bouck White—he is tempted to ask: Is this the same Christ at all? Representations of Him as prophet, king, peasant, cross-bearer, conqueror, mystic, spokesman of the proletariat, God, man—the confusion seems almost hopeless.

If the effort is merely to exhume from beneath the deposits of the centuries the historic individual, Jesus, it would be wise to throw away three-fourths of all these as worthless. If, on the other hand, we have a continuous multiform endeavor, not so much to discover the details of a departed life as to interpret a creative personality, who fulfills as does no other the Human Ideal, the whole enterprise takes on a different aspect. In this case every honest and intelligent

interpretation of Christ is as the stroke of a releasing chisel, or a sketch from a new angle. Instead of heresies to combat and misrepresentations to denounce, these interpretations become contributions to welcome and weigh, new insights to cherish and use. Not that they are all consistent, or pertinent. There should be discrimination and appraisal in regard to them—rejection in some cases. Yet none that is reverent and sincere can be entirely false or useless. For all reflect *facets* of the scintillating human ideal that we find in the Son of Man. That which Johannes Weiss said of the Christologies we may say also of the living Christ:

> Out of all these stammering attempts to express the essence of Christ in formulas, we only learn how mighty the personality must have been that inspired men to such faith, which has ruled their imagination and engaged their thought for thousands of years.[9]

VII

The Ideal incarnated in Jesus we cannot appraise too highly. We cannot overrate it; we cannot over-revere it; for it is itself divine. "Jesus Christ is the goal of all," wrote Pascal, "and the center to which all tends. He who knows Him knows the reason of all things." Try to raise any other human being to this representative place and the human, or rather the sub-human, admixture proves too great. It is no haphazard that has elevated Jesus Christ to so creative and representative a relation to the faith of the world. A larger purpose than humanity's discloses itself here. He

[9] *Christus, Die Anfänge des Dogmas*, p. 88.

could not hold this height were He not qualified. A weaker personality would wither in this blinding light, unable to stand the searching test of time, the outflow of human devotion, and the strain of human need.

Every new insight, therefore, from a fresh mind, an added race, a new generation, into the radiant depths of the Christ within Jesus, is so much added wealth of spiritual possession, so much advance toward our common apprehension of the Ideal. Without some concrete person to whom to attach itself this Idealism would scatter and waste much of its insight and force. If it ranges beyond the boundaries of the historic Jesus for its treasures, it brings them back to Him and finds Him universal enough to receive them.

"But are you not yielding a place, and a large place," it may be urged, "to the idealizing instinct in thus exalting Christ?" We reply with the query: Is this idealizing? Idealizing, in the sense intended by the question, means putting something into a character which it cannot carry. Another and truer kind of idealizing is the discovery of the fuller meaning of the Ideal, in Jesus Christ and at the same time in ourselves. For if it were not implanted in ourselves we could never find it in Him. The two images of the Ideal, in Him and in ourselves, fulfill each other. Deep calleth unto deep. Suppose it were granted that Jesus has been selected by a large part of the race to be its Ideal and that that is the whole story of why He is so exalted—the question would remain: *Why has He been thus selected?* And why does He continue to embody the moral ideal as He does? Is it not because of a unique fitness for the purpose? In the

case of Christ, is it possible to idealize beyond the reality? If we could separate the individual, Jesus, from the Spirit, the Christ, within Him, perhaps it would be possible. But that we cannot do. The two are too closely linked.

VIII

If we think that the apostles, or the fathers, or the reformers, or the mystics, or the modernists, have exhausted "the mind of Christ," drunk dry this ever-flowing spring, or if we imagine that to *us* who have inherited all of this treasure-trove the whole inclusive meaning of Christ has been disclosed, we are likely to prove greatly mistaken. Jesus Christ "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" gives evidence of being yet unexhausted, the depths of His resources unplumbed. It may well be that we are upon the eve of a fresh unfolding of the riches of the Eternal Christ, ready to appear as the Orient turns its deep meditative vision upon Him whom its Laotzes and Buddhas, its Tao-teh-kings and Bhagavadgitas, its mysteries and meditations, its religious searchings and moral disciplines, have been preparing to understand and revere, in some of His aspects, better than we of the West. Already are being christened into the family of Christ Gautama and Confucius and Zoroaster, as well as Abraham, Moses, and Socrates, and every other servant of righteousness who "rejoices to see His day and is glad." There is good reason to believe that future generations may find in the Christ even more than has yet been found.

VI

The Perfect Person

We now come to the heart and center of our inquiry —Supreme Personality.[1] We are assured, by conscious intuitive self-recognition, of the reality of ourselves and, by personal contact with them, of other like selves. Together finite selves constitute a realm of persons within the realm of nature yet transcending it.

Is there any sufficient reason why we should think of the personal world as more inclusive than this? In addition to the company of human selves, incarnate and discarnate, does the Personal Order require, in order to explain and fulfill it, a perfect or Supreme Person?[2] If so, it may well be that here lies the consummative and interpretive principle of personality itself.

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[1] Any treatment of such a theme, in abstract terms, should be regarded as "seeing through a glass darkly."

[2] Professor Howison in *The Limits of Evolution* answers this question as follows: "It is impossible to exclude from the total circle that Supreme Person whose mark of individual difference is his eternal perfection in the rational nature which, under various conditions of manifestation amid defects, is common to all the others," p. 277.

I

It is of the essence of human personality to be conscious of limitation, imperfection, incompleteness, and to look toward that which is perfect and complete. Does this imply a being who is perfect? Or is the thought of, and desire for, perfection an outreach toward something purely "imaginary," or only theoretical and abstract?

It has long been held by those who accept the ontological proof that the idea of a Perfect Being could not occur without involving His existence; or (to put it in another and better form) that the idea would not have arisen without *experiencing* such a Being and thus being assured of His reality.[3] It is hardly a conclusive objection to adduce the famous argument with which the monk Guanilo sought to refute Anselm (the progenitor of the ontological proof) and say that the idea of such a Being no more involves His existence than the idea of a perfect island involves its existence. This objection will not stand examination. Perfection *per se* is not a quality of islands, or of any other material object, but only of personality.[4] It is fundamentally a moral, or value, quality and grounds in what Plato showed to be the primal and creative reality, *i.e.*, Goodness. As such, perfection becomes the norm in all realms of value.

[3] *Cf.* Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience,* Chapter XXII. The Yale University Press, 1912.

[4] I find in Bergson's recent volume *La Pensée et Le Mouvant* much which seems to sustain this interpretation of perfection, *e.g.*, "Seule, la coïncidence avec le personne même me donnerait l'absolu . . . Mais l'absolu est parfait en ce qu'il est parfaitement ce qu'il est." (p. 204.)

"For nothing that is imperfect can be the measure of anything." [5]

It is difficult to account for the attempt to reach perfection, with its impetus to unlimited improvement and advance, in every direction, unless perfection exists in the only absolute norm in which it can exist—Perfect Personality. The urge toward the unattained, the perfect, the transcendent, cannot be sufficiently accounted for without the Perfect One, and when followed to its source issues in conscious faith in Him. Professor Edouard LeRoy has given exceptionally clear expression to this conviction in his striking volume, *Le Problème de Dieu*.[6]

> To orient oneself on every plane toward the better, to believe comprehensively, in a theoretical and practical way, in a beyond and with one's whole soul to seek that beyond, to aim in consequence at overpassing the whole process of finite realization from the viewpoint of perfection—that, we see, is what it is to affirm God. On the other hand, to recognize a determined process of orientation in universal becoming, to affirm that this becoming is a progress, a process of realization on the upward path, a striving for expansion, a working toward the manifestation of the supernatural: that is to affirm that God exists. To grant in short that God acts on us in the way a person acts and to conclude that we should in turn deal with Him like a person also: that is to assert the divine *personality*. Lastly, so far as one lays down in principle

[5] Plato, *The Republic*, Book VI.

[6] An account of this significant book and its author, by Professor Walter M. Horton, may be found in *Religion in Life* (Summer number, 1933).

> the primacy of moral reality, just so far does one believe in God. In one sense, then, *there are no atheists.*[7]

This is to say, I take it, not that the aspiration toward something beyond (*i.e.*, the perfect) *is* God, but that it *involves* God. It cannot be accounted for *without* God.[8]

II

If there were no personality higher than our own two questions would prove unanswerable: (1) Why do we regard ourselves as imperfect? and (2) Why is perfection not only an idea but an ideal?

The only adequate explanation of the consciousness of imperfection is that it involves a knowledge that there is such a thing as perfection. We are met here, that is, by one of those reciprocal dualities one term of which requires

[7] . . . S'orienter en tout ordre vers le meilleur, croire spéculativement et pratiquement à un au-delà en tout et de toute son âme chercher cet au-delà, tendre par consequent à dépasser toute réalization finie dans le sens de la perfection croissante, voilà ce qui est affirmer Dieu. D'autre part, reconnaître une orientation définie au devenir cosmique, dire que ce devenir est un progrès, un réalization ascendante, un effort d'épanouissement, un travail de surnaturalization: c'est affirmer que Dieu existe. Admettre enfin que Dieu agit sur nous à la façon d'une personne et conclure que réciproquement nous devons le traiter comme une personne aussi: c'est affirmer la personnalité divine. Finalement, dans la mesure où l'on pose en principe le primat de la réalité morale, dans cette mesure même on croit en Dieu. En un sens, donc, il n'y a point d'athées. *Le Problème de Dieu*, p. 122.

[8] The emphasis here placed upon the Ontological Argument should not be taken to imply that the other classic arguments are without cogency. The Causal Argument *e.g.*, as presented by Plato is still pertinent (if understood as asserting Divine Immanence).

Socrates: May our body be said to have a soul?

Protarchus: Clearly.

Socrates: And whence comes that soul, my dear Protarchus, unless the body of the universe, which contains elements similar and fairer far, had also a soul? *Philebus* (Jowett).

the other. *It is impossible to dissever imperfection, in idea, from perfection.* The two are contrapletes.[9]

But is this an idea only? Or (to return to our first question) does a consciously imperfect person involve *existent* Perfect Person? The answer seems to be an affirmative, for the reason, already suggested, that in the realm of personality perfection necessarily includes existence, as well as idea, the two being, in the nature of the case, coincident.[10]

Lacking the identity of idea and existence, Perfection would lack not only complete validity as an idea but also appeal as an ideal. Jesus' moving injunction: "Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect" would lose its force if He had said: Be ye therefore perfect according to your idea of perfection. (That He himself could become the proximate Ideal is only because He so faithfully pursued the Ultimate Ideal.)

Plato, for whom the Moral Ideal was so full of meaning, found in the Eternal Form of "the Good" the inspiration and goal of all moral striving, but it is significant that when he (or Socrates) exhorts men to become like God, and when he brings the Good into creative action, *the Idea becomes personal and is now the Good God.* This appears very clearly in the familiar words in *Timæus:* "Let me tell you then why the creator made the world of generation. He was good and the good can never have jealousy of anything.

[9] *Cf.* article cited, "A Broadening Factor in Logic." *The Philosophical Review,* September, 1931.

[10] An illuminating discussion of this subject may be found in the chapter, "The Ontological Argument in Royce and Others," by W. E. Hocking in the volume *Contemporary Idealism in America.* The Macmillan Co., 1932.

And being pure from jealousy he desired that all things should be as like himself as they could be." The Platonic Value-Forms, the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, are inexplicable and impotent, as Augustine saw, except as ideas in the mind of God. In other words they are abstract and incompetent except as personal. Plato himself perceived this, as in a glass darkly. In the light of Christianity it is seen face to face.

III

But if perfection is possible only in personality, why One Perfect Being only? Why not many perfect beings? [11] Because it is the very nature of Perfection to be unitary. To be unitary does not mean to be solitary but rather to be perfectly interrelated, inwardly unified, and thus able to be creatively self-revealing and self-imparting.[12] Thus only could the Perfect One be both Source and Goal. Only because He is unitary can His unity be reflected potentially in each of the many. Only because He is complete in Himself can He be shared. This is not mere philosophical dialectic. It is not only grounded in reason but involved in experience. "There is none good save One" is Jesus' recognition of the unitary nature of perfection, stated in terms so clear and simple as to command immediate, intuitive assent.

Although the Perfect, as Idea and Ideal, appears to have

[11] This subject is resumed in another form in the concluding chapter. *Cf.* pp. 176-178.

[12] This, of course, is the underlying meaning of the doctrine, so sorely distorted and misunderstood, of the Trinity. Dean W. R. Mathews has suggested that God may be also Self-creative. *Cf. God and This Troubled World* (New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1934).

dawned slowly upon the vision of the imperfect, once seen, it is inexpugnable. "A spark disturbs our clod." The imperfect cannot rest content without relating itself to the Perfect. "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and we cannot rest until we rest in Thee." Translated into terms of love, this means that human love cannot be accounted for without Divine Love.

> "Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
> That I doubt his own love can compete with it? Here the parts shift?
> Here, the creature surpass the Creator—the end what Began?" [13]

We conclude, then, that the ontological argument, regarded as formulating the consciousness of a Perfect Person, involved in the experience of personal imperfection, has profound cogency. As Descartes put it: "Since I knew some perfections which I did not possess, I concluded that I was not the only being in existence, but on the contrary that there was of necessity some other more perfect Being on whom I was dependent and from whom I had received all that I possessed." [14]

IV

Yet a new problem arises. If God is personal must He not, like man, be an individual; and how can an individual be other than limited? [15]

[13] Robert Browning, "Saul."

[14] *Discourse on Method,* Part IV.

[15] The differentiation of individuality from personality is discussed in the writer's volumes, *Personality and the Christian Ideal,* (pp. 39, 40), and *The Humanity of God,* (pp. 59 ff.).

The difficulty which many minds encounter of conceiving God as personal lies just here. They identify personality and individuality. To ascribe personality to God appears to them to limit, anthropomorphize, individualize Him. So it does, if personality is identical with individuality. But there is no need whatever for such identification. *The conception of God as Pure Person by no means implies that He is an individual.* In fact pure personality precludes individuality. Individuality belongs to finitude. Individuals by the very possession of individuality are finite, limited, incomplete, and differ from one another partly because of their limitations. The Perfect Person, not being limited, cannot be an individual.

How is it, then (it may be asked), that Bosanquet can call God the only Individual, and that Royce can speak of "the Absolute as Himself the highest fulfilment of the very Category of Individuality, the Individual of Individuals"? [16] The answer is, I take it, that Individuality is used by both of these writers not in its customary designation of those minor differences which distinguish one member of a class or group, from another, but as indicating that principle of Spiritual Uniqueness which is characteristic of personality at its highest and distinguishes it from individuality. In the sense of absolute uniqueness God as Person may be said to be the only Individual, since He alone is complete; but in the sense of having individualizing characteristics, such as distinguish John Doe from John Smith, He is not an individual at all. God *i.e.*, is not an individual for

[16] *The World and the Individual,* Vol. I, p. 40. The Macmillan Co., 1901.

the reason that He is without individual characteristics. As complete, infinite, perfect, He transcends individuality. He is, however, individual, so to speak, by being without finite individuality.

V

Perhaps the best descriptive term for God is that which is common to both religion and philosophy, *i.e., Spirit.* "Spirit" as applied to Him means virtually, I take it, the same as "Pure *Person.*" To conceive God as a Spirit is to conceive Him as free, self-subsistent, perfect, unindividualized personality, who encompasses and indwells in His world creatively and yet is not confined to it.[17]

To say, however, that God, as Pure Spirit, or Perfect Person, is not an *individual* is not to say that He has not the most definite and positive personal qualities. For definiteness, or uniqueness of personality does not depend upon the peculiar traits which distinguish one human being from another. Our own personalities, as they develop, become less and less crudely individualistic yet more and more distinctly and definitely differentiated, morally and spiritually. Each of us weaves a character for himself unlike any other, though of the same moral fibre. All highly developed persons possess the essentials of moral character and at the same time are very unlike in their characteristic forms of self-expression.

Just as all substantial buildings rest on a foundation that

[17] The term Spirit in its more comprehensive meaning, as Spiritual Being (geistiges Sein), includes all that is of a spiritual nature—the moral, the religious, the æsthetic.

differs but little in structural form while in superstructure they vary as greatly as the Parthenon and Cologne Cathedral, so the great personalities of history, such as Gautama, Confucius, Socrates, Paul, St. Francis, Wesley, Lincoln, all possess a like substructure of integrity, unselfishness, humility, and other moral fundamentals, yet they differ greatly in the personal superstructures built upon these virtues, and even in the qualities and tones of the virtues themselves.

Integrity is integrity everywhere and always, but Job had one form of it and Thoreau another. Humility is humility in St. Francis and in Abraham Lincoln, but each has his characteristic form of it. We all "beat out" our music—so far as it is music—upon the same spiritual scale, but not all in the same key, and each has his own theme and variations. All good persons share the same virtues, yet they differ and will go on differing more and more as they progress—not by reason of individual idiosyncrasies but by virtue of the varied falcations of true goodness. Paul put this truth in the form of an illuminating and beautiful analogy when he wrote, describing spiritual personality, "one star differeth from another star in glory."

It is impossible, however, for God, as Perfect Person, to differ from others on the same level of being as Himself; for there is no other on that level. We are of the same personal order as He but on another level. He alone is Pure Personality.[18] *Yet it is this very perfection that relates Him*

[18] "I believe in an Infinite God who is Perfect with a Perfection which transcends human conception and with whom I enter into such a union as befits a finite being by wholehearted devotion to my ideal of the Good." Charles A. Campbell, *Scepticism and Construction*. The Macmillan Co., 1931.

so vitally to us the imperfect. For, being perfect, He cannot do other than impart Himself. We may conceive of God as out of His replete and outflowing personality imparting something of Himself to all selves who are becoming persons. "God can give Himself to His creatures," as Schelling wrote, "only as He gives a self to them." [19]

VI

Our sharing in the Divine Personality may be compared to the sharing of all living creatures in life. Every living creature—animal, bird, insect, tree, shrub, plant, flower—possesses a particular portion of life, but life itself has no such particularity. Life is not only an essence (logically conceived) but an energy of which all living beings partake. This gives it its distinctive quality. It has indefinable vital energy, registering itself in consciousness, which distinguishes it from all that is *not* life; and each living creature has its own incarnation of this vital entity. So with personality. It is the same in essence in every person, yet each is a single autonomous self and has his own endowment of personality to put to usury. "He who is the Father of Spirits will have his image brought forth in every one of His offspring by the thought and conviction of each soul itself." [20]

Thus we may conceive of God, who is Spirit, as the fountainhead of personality, having a completeness which renders Him uniquely definite and distinct, yet not as one

[19] Further treatment of the principle of Impartation will be found in the last chapter.

[20] G. H. Howison, *The Limits of Evolution*, p. 257. (First edition.)

finite individual differs from other individuals. His distinguishing character is just perfection itself. This makes Him sole, yet not solitary; for His nature, being purely personal, gives Him (as has been said) relationship to all persons. While human persons are dependent, because imperfect, He, as Perfect Person, may be conceived as self-subsistent, having what the older philosophy termed substance, *i.e.*, existence in Himself. Yet his absoluteness is not the absence, but the repleteness, of relationships.

Perfect Personality as such, then (to repeat), so far from requiring individuality dispenses with it entirely and is unique in so doing. We would come nearer to the truth, I take it, if we should say: God is Person, rather than *a* Person, for this would explicitly remove from Him the limitation of the particular and individual. A finite God, struggling against a hostile universe—as suggested, *e.g.*, by Mr. Wells in *God the Invisible King*, and later advocated by Professors Montague and Brightman [21]—is doubtless far better than none, but such a God makes a sorry figure beside the God of Isaiah's vision "high and lifted up" yet whose "train fills the Temple"—thus symbolizing the union of transcendence and immanence.

It is sometimes said in derogation of perfection, that it is inert, static, passive. On the contrary perfection is the most active of all forms of being, for its activity is not striving but giving, which is the purest and highest form of activity.

[21] Wm. Pepperell Montague, *Belief Unbound*. Yale University Press, 1930. Edgar Sheffield Brightman, *The Problem of God*. The Abingdon Press, 1931. *Vide* "God and the Given" by the present writer, *The Journal of Religion*, April, 1934.

The conception of God as developing would of course involve his finitude and would leave neither Final Cause nor Adequate Aid for human development. It would transform the well-known hymn into something like the following:

> Progress and change in all around I see
> O Thou who changest most, progress with me!

VII

Yet, although the idea of the *Perfect Person* may be said to involve His existence, this by no means accounts for the kind and measure of assurance which we have of God. Confidence in Him, to be sufficient, must rest not upon a thought process but upon direct knowledge of Him. Have we this? Have we a God-consciousness? No; if by God-consciousness is meant a distinct form of consciousness whose object is God. Yes; if it is meant that within self-consciousness itself lies implicit the consciousness not only of other human selves but of that Other Self without whom we could not be.

Our knowledge of God, therefore, is far from being a "projection." It is "objective" in the sense that it has an object; but its object is a subject, *i.e.*, a Person. In other words such knowledge is experiential. This is what makes it religious.[22] God, that is, is primarily not Idea, or Object,

[22] It was Schleiermacher who brought this out most conclusively. In the Introduction of his *The Christian Faith* he wrote as follows: "In each self-consciousness there are also two elements—so to speak—self-affirmation and a *not-thus-to-be-had* consciousness, or a being and an *ever-by-some-means-coming-to-be*. The latter of these presupposes for every self-consciousness Another Somewhat besides the Ego. . . . Thus in self-consciousness there is a two-foldness—the one element expresses the being of the subject for itself, the other its being-with-an-Other."

but experienced Person. As Coleridge wrote: "We may feel *from* and about a thing, an event, a quality, we can feel *toward* a Person only. The personal in me is the ground and condition of Religion, and the Personal alone is the Object." [23] If God were an outer object, then the knowledge of Him would rest upon external objective evidence; if He were only a logical conclusion, then the knowledge of Him would rest upon logic; but being Person the knowledge of Him must be essentially of the same kind as knowledge of other persons, *i.e., recognition.*

We know other selves by direct personal intercourse with them. We know the Supreme Self in the same way. Such at least has always been the confidence of the God-conscious; for many a man has felt God to be with him just as really as the human selves with whom he associates.[24]

We cannot see God, but neither can we see any person. We do not need to prove His existence; for we cannot avoid Him. "God, as Plato said," wrote Plotinus, "is not far from each person; rather He is very near to all without their knowing it, they themselves flee Him, or rather they flee themselves." These words find an echo in every generation.

VIII

The assurance of God by a simple act of recognition is very plausible, it will be said, but if He is thus *with us,* in our personal world, why is the sense of His Presence, though

[23] Quoted from an unpublished manuscript of Coleridge by J. H. Muirhead, *Coleridge as Philosopher,* p. 36. The Macmillan Co., 1930.

[24] The different ways in which the Divine Presence is experienced are described in the next chapter.

at times so real, at other times so fugitive, so susceptible to doubt, and in the case of many so apparently lacking altogether? If He is "closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet" why are not all men, at all times, aware of Him?

The answer may be found, I think, in the very nature of personal relationships. The fact is, we are not at all times equally aware of each other, *i.e.*, personally. The outer and visible sign of another self, which is the body, may be present to indicate that that other is near; but in spite of this, sometimes perhaps because of it, we drift seas apart personally, until some deep common experience brings us within hail again and we become once more alive to each other as persons. Thus, too, as between the Eternal Presence and ourselves. When we are not "in tune with the Infinite" He remains unrecognized. We drift out of contact with Him until we are brought near by some convincing spiritual experience. When one "finds letters from God dropped in the street, and every one signed by God's name"—as Walt Whitman says he did—he does not need to ask whether there is a God.

The dimness of this consciousness, on the part of anyone, need not however always imply serious fault. It may be due to circumstances as well as to inner causes. Whatever the cause, the only way to break through and resolve the estrangement is clearly by an act such as that by which we succeed in gaining (or, if lost, in recovering) the personal nearness to one another which circumstances and our own failures are always tending to thwart and destroy. "Be still

and know that I am God": this is the way. It is in quietude and harmony of spirit that the Infinite Presence makes Itself felt.

God known by personal recognition: this is an act easy for some but hard for others. While God is present and accessible to everyone, even to a child, to realize His presence demands that often difficult outreach of confidence which all personal recognition and communion require. But the result answers the deepest need of the soul.

> The only far-off divine event for which the whole creation groans and travails, toward which the whole creation moves, is the communion of man with God and God with man. The home-coming of all his sons to God is the far-off divine event. . . . It is for this reason that one of the freemen of our own time has said that, despite its difficulties, the metaphor of Father and Son, familiar to us in the Gospels, is on the whole the best figure of speech which we can find to describe the religious relationship.[25]

IX

Another inference from perfection, conceived as active rather than passive, may be drawn. As Perfect, God can hardly (if perfection includes love) be other than purposeful, protective, directive. In other words the familiar and long trusted Christian conception of Providence requires recognition in any adequate consideration of the nature of God as Perfect Person.[26] True perfection, that is, does not

[25] Willard L. Sperry, *The Paradox of Religion,* p. 62. The Macmillan Co., 1931.

[26] The Christian conception of Providence, in certain of its many aspects, is discussed in the writer's *The Humanity of God,* Chapters XII and XIII.

isolate God from the actual historical movement of man but relates Him more closely to it.

It will be objected that reasoning thus from the Divine Perfection to the character of His activities and relationships is pure assumption. This objection is not valid. The truth is, we use this principle constantly in our dealings with one another. When we have once made up our mind that a person is good, we interpret (and justly) all his conduct in the light of that confidence. We cannot well do less with reference to God. The fault has been not with the principle of Providence but with the application of it. Always held tenaciously, the belief has never been treated with adequate intelligence, and has often taken very ill-considered and childish forms. Manifestly it needs revision in the light of modern knowledge.

Difficult as it is, the doctrine of Providence is not incapable of more reasonable reading than it has hitherto had. It may be approached, for instance, from some such viewpoint as that suggested by Professor Whitehead's *Adventures of Ideas*. The very existence of a great idea (as he, however, fails to recognize) inevitably carries the human mind beyond itself to a more comprehensive Mind. A vital creative idea cannot be a mental foundling. Whose idea is it? Whence did it arise? Why has it persisted? What is to be its outcome? Such questions at once take one beyond the idea itself and the human minds that adventure with it, to a Supreme Mind. Indeed, a great idea "dawns" upon humanity as if coming from a higher source. Granted that a seminal idea, as Whitehead avers, has "a creative power,

making possible its own approach to realization," [27] to leave it at that is to leave it suspended in a vacuum. Ideas are not self-generated or self-propagated. The only sufficing source for truly seminal ideas—to one in search of ultimates—is the Logos, revealing an Eternal Mind in whom the Idea as such has its birth and from whom receptive-creative minds draw it for development and fructification.

The great creative ideas which have made human history—such as Right, Truth, Beauty, Love, Freedom—have, it is true, a kind of half-autonomous reality and potency in themselves; yet their very vitality and creativeness are indicative of their relation to an Eternal Mind and in their development and fructification point to a directive Providence.

X

Attempts have been made from time to time to undertake the alluring though colossal task of constructing a Philosophy of History, beginning with that first daring initiative effort, Paul's *Epistle to the Romans,* followed by Augustine's *City of God,* and coming down, through many less comprehensive endeavors, to Hegel's *Philosophy of History* and Spengler's contrasted *The Decline of the West.*

As the field of history widens environmental, economic, and psychological factors have become apparent which have, quite naturally, drawn attention away from the ruling idea of Divine Purpose which formed the motif of the earlier enterprises. The teleological factor was doubtless at first made too dominant. Yet it lingers in the background and

[27] *Op. cit.,* p. 53.

is bound to reassert itself, though in an altered setting; for a comprehensive reading of human history makes it difficult if not impossible to exclude teleology.

It is not, however, without significance that the effort to find Divine direction in human affairs has had to undergo great difficulties. Slowly, painfully, haltingly, baffled by perplexities and misleading appearances, yet unable to break away from the conviction that "there's a Divinity that shapes our ends," thoughtful minds have been reaching out after a conception of the "ways of God" with men such as may form the basis of a rationally reconstructed theory of Providence.

Such a theory may perhaps be tentatively outlined somewhat as follows:

1. Divine Providence, if it is to be conceived rationally and in harmony with general human experience and "natural law," must act uniformly and not by caprice, or miraculous "intervention," or in any other unnatural or opportunist fashion.

2. It will show no favoritism—benefactions and bounties, like sunshine and rain, being only "general" and not "particular," subject therefore to all the complex conditions of so vast a mechanical and organic system as Science discloses.

3. The chief objective of such a Providence can only be regarded, not as the preservation of human life, or health, or even happiness, but the development of personality, and the construction of a true personal-social order, in all the manifold relations and expressions which such an order involves.

4. The essential means of such a Providence can hardly be other than that of "Divine Persuasion," [28] or Grace.

5. Its method, or technique (so to speak), would seem to be that of Guidance, acting, through reason, upon individual and corporate circumstances and environment.

The ends of such a Providence can be attained only by free agents acting in harmony—a "system" which has, in the very possession of the freedom which is essential to it, the possibility of the rise of wilfulness against it, thus unavoidably begetting the whole enginery of the Kingdom of Evil, that "creation within a creation" whose overcoming may eventuate in the increase of Good itself.[29]

Disclosures of some such providential order are discernible; but in the nature of the case they can be only partial and momentary, like glimpses of the summit of a lofty, mist-hidden mountain, visible only through briefly parting clouds.

[28] Divine Persuasion is the Platonic anticipation of Grace, as Professor Whitehead interprets it. *Adventures of Ideas,* p. 205. A farther discussion of Grace will be found in the last chapter.

[29] Goethe has strikingly expressed this unintended issue of Evil in the scene in which Mephistopheles appears to Faust and in answer to his question, "What art thou then?" replies: "Part of that Power, not understood, which always wills the bad and always works the good."

VII

God As Experience

If God is pervasive in human thought as the All-Perfect, in consciousness as the universal Other, and in life and history as Eternal Purpose, as Christianity implies—why is He not more universally and clearly known and worshiped?

There never was a time in the life of humanity, it is safe to say, when men so freely and carelessly, not to say jauntily, dispensed with God as today. It is reported that a thriving international association of Atheists has a membership mounting into many millions. Poor God! Or (should we say?) poor Atheists!

Such a movement leads one to ask: Why should those who do not believe in God *organize?* Why do they carry on a propaganda? Three reasons for this come to mind: (1) that antagonism to truth and goodness which lurks darkly within us all and finds expression in an exclamation lately brought to my notice: "There is no God, and Oh, how I hate him!" (2) the inconsistent lives of those of us who profess belief in Him, and (3) the empty, conventional, and often repellent ways in which He is (unintentionally)

interpreted. God has much to forgive His advocates. We may well recall in our day what Frederick W. Robertson said of the atheism of Shelley: "I will not say that a man who by his opposition to God means opposition to a demon . . . is an enemy of God."

In spite of these obstacles and misrepresentations, God may be trusted not only to hold his own but to convince man that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, and also that He is the Everlasting Mercy—the compassionate Friend of those who passionately or lightly deny or ignore Him. Either God is very inadequate, or He is very patient. I prefer the latter alternative.

I

To apprehend the experience of God in its wider scope requires that we go back to its roots in religion itself.

Nothing in the findings of anthropology is more significant—nothing, perhaps, is as significant—as the discovery that religion, varied and often repellent as are its forms, has been the most definitive, the most pervasive, the most dearly prized, the most *human* interest in the life of the race. Its art, its temples, its sacrifices, its visions, its creeds, its varied enterprises, all attest this. Since religion culminates in relationship to a Supreme Being, to lose touch with Him would apparently mean to lose the very Stay and Shekinah of the human spirit. Is this to happen? Partially it may be, and for a time; but not for those "whom God whispers in the ear," in Browning's words, nor ever wholly. Men may deny

God, ignore Him, insult Him—they cannot escape Him. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?" is the cry of the universal human soul, reechoed in our own day in "The Hound of Heaven."

> "I fled Him, down the nights and down the days,
> I fled Him, down the arches of the years,
> I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
> Of my own mind. . . ."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "But with untarrying chase,
> And unperturbed pace,
> Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
> They beat—and a Voice beat
> More instant than the Feet—
> 'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.' "

When Professor LeRoy affirms that there are no genuine atheists, only *intentional* atheists,[1] he does not mean what Professor D. C. Mackintosh calls "identifying 'God' with something almost no one ever thought of denying." The kind of atheism he intends may perhaps be illustrated by the story of the convention of atheists in which one very ardent believer rebuked his lukewarm associates exclaiming, "You are only half-atheists! Now I'm an out-and-out atheist. Thank God!"

The ancient mind drew back in deep dread before the sin of "hybris," *pride,* before the gods. It is the superiority of our age to patronize, rather than dread, Divinity. It may be that atheism is more acceptable to God than patronizingly

[1] *Supra,* p. 82.

admitting Him to partnership with us, or using the idea of God for our own ends. Perhaps the Barthian theology, with all its one-sidedness, may have arisen to shame our age for this commercializing of God.[2]

II

What kind of an experience is the experience of God? If we take the expressions of those who have had it, or believe they have had it, in various ages and races, and compare them with that which we ourselves have had I think we may say that the common element in the experience is best described, on the whole, as one of *Presence*. *Religion is that sense of the sacred which becomes the sense of a Sacred Personal Presence.* It is an experience of Some-one like ourselves and yet wholly superior to ourselves, to whom we are spiritually related.

In the earlier stages of religion this Some-one was conceived of as a mystical mysterious quality, or potency, called *Mana, Orenda,* or *Manitou*—a veiled Presence which Otto has termed the *Numinous*.[3] But, as religion developed, this Numinous was increasingly realized as being aware, conscious, communicable, so that some kind of communion and interchange could be had with this Other. Finally, in such gods as Ahura Mazda of the Persians, Zeus of the

[2] Yet how little Barth and his school see of the infinitely multiform and gracious ways in which the Spirit of God is at work in the hearts and lives of men!

[3] It is to be remembered, however, that, as Marett has pointed out, a magical element was intermingled with the sense of the sacred in *Mana,* which gave it a double aspect.

Greeks, and especially in Jahveh of the Hebrew prophets and psalmists, the Religious Object became recognized as personal. At length in Christianity men dared to think of Him as like One who went about doing good and died upon a cross. Thus religion manifests a striking advance from the vague to the definite, from the implicit to the explicit, from the unmoral to the moral, from the impersonal or semi-personal to the personal, from the mysterious to "the Beyond that is within," from the "Wholly Other" to One who awakens not dread and dismay but trust and love.

If this advance in the conception of God is purely human, it is one of man's chief achievements. If it is revelation, it is the continuous unfolding of Divine wisdom and grace. If it is both revelation and achievement it is the union and consummation of the cosmic and historic processes under the guidance of a supremely patient purposefulness.

III

In what ways does this sense of Presence come to men most clearly and convincingly? One way is through experiencing the beautiful. A nimbus of sacredness, so to speak, invests the beautiful as if it were the attestation of its Divine Source and nature. It is not there when you critically study the components of beauty—symmetry, color, composition. But when you stand receptively before a beautiful scene in Nature, like the Jungfrau, or Yosemite Valley, or the Bay of Naples, or a noble work of art, like Cologne Cathedral, or the Hermes of Praxiteles, or the Sistine Madonna—

strangely, indefinably, intangibly, there breaks upon you a consciousness of something super-sensible accompanying the beautiful yet not identical with the beautiful object itself. Perhaps is was this that Plato meant when in the *Symposium* (of which Emerson said that the day a man first reads it is one of the great days of his life) he described the soul as mounting from one order of beautiful things to another until at last it arrives at Absolute Beauty and knows what is its essence. Beauty itself can hardly be regarded as less than spiritual—less than the presence of God.

When Wordsworth, in those moving "Lines Above Tintern Abbey," sought to voice the subduing yet uplifting experience that came to him in communion with Nature, the word he chose was *presence:* "And I have felt a presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts." An experience of Presence is the overplus, the nimbus, as we have called it, of Beauty. It haloes the beautiful as the environing orb of its complete meaning.

IV

Yet there is another experience in which the sense of Presence is more vital and more personal still: *i.e.,* the pervasive conviction of sacredness that attaches to Duty. Morality and religion are as closely kindred as soul and body; yet they are not identical. Loyalty to duty is enveloped in a consciousness—confirming, hallowing, completing—of One with whom we are united, the law of whose being is Right Itself. Disobedience to the moral imperative awakens

a haunting, disturbing sense of disloyalty to One whose very nature is Goodness. "It is against Thee I have sinned" is the cry of every man's conscience. Without penitence no one can come to himself and find his way homeward. "He who has no sense of sin," an eminent philosopher once remarked, "is either a knave or a fool."

Beauty, duty: these human experiences cannot be detached from a Presence—God. Much less can that still more intimate experience—*Prayer*. Jesus praying—Paul, Augustine, St. Francis, Luther, Wesley, Gandhi, Kagawa—is it possible to think of these sons of God as lifting their souls to Nothingness in a spiritual Void? It is as unthinkable as is a bird beating its futile wings in a vacuum, or an eye opening expectant only on black and perpetual night. No one can explain prayer, but no one can explain it away. Unless the soul of man has been unconscionably misled by its deepest impulses prayer has within it some kind of *mutuality*.

It is impossible to overlook another form of experience that carries within it a unique consciousness of God, and that is the sense of an Encompassing Personal Presence which one has when he comes into vital contact with Jesus Christ. The disciples felt this with transforming power; the apostles felt it; the early Church felt it. No generation since Jesus Christ entered the temporal order, not even our own, has been able to escape the conviction that, in some way, when one stands before this personality he is in the presence of One still greater than Jesus, of whom He could not have said less than, "My Father is greater than I." Our generation with its cool criticism, its sophistication, its self-sufficiency,

has been able to thrust aside this sense of the Divine, encompassing Jesus, more deliberately than any other. Nevertheless there are more millions of men and women the world over who are finding God through Christ today than ever before.

God present in Beauty, in Duty, in Prayer, in Christ: this is *experience*—vital, searching, transforming. Yet this does not mean that it is without its problems and its difficulties. No experience that is worth anything is to be had and held without meeting difficulties.

V

How is it possible, *e.g.*, for this personal Presence to be with us all at the same time? In other words how can Presence be Omnipresence? That singularly searching *Psalm of the Divine Presence,* the 139th, perhaps the most vivid voicing of this experience in literature—"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me . . ."—stirs a response in the soul like the tones of a bell heard in the hush of evening. Who can fail to feel its reverberations in his soul? And yet "the freezing reason's colder part" penetrates the calm of such an experience, asking: How can a Divine Consciousness "acquainted with all my ways" be aware of the inmost thoughts of all men, everywhere, at the same time?

Theology may dogmatically affirm this, and term it Omniscience, but is the mind persuaded? Is the intellect satisfied? Consciousness may at moments of peculiar spiritual sensitiveness affirm, "Thou hast beset me behind and before and

laid Thine hand upon me," and theology may declare, "Yes, this is Omnipresence"; but reason comes stealthily by night to ask the question of the dubious Nicodemus: "How can these things be?" Such queries cannot be exhaustively answered. I doubt if we need to answer them. And yet our own experience of one another, if we examine it, lets in not a little light upon them.[4]

Our knowledge of one another is very limited, yet very penetrating and pervasive. Consider a mother's knowledge of her children. The brooding, watchful, inescapable *ubiquity* of such love is not to be restricted to the bounds of our capacity to understand it. It is not irrational to conceive of the Infinite Love—searching, encompassing, enfolding—as that of One who (in the picturesque language of the psalmist) "watching Israel slumbers not nor sleeps."

"But," rejoins the frigid voice of Reason, "so ridiculously *many* children of God and *such* children, many of them!" True, the thought is baffling. Yet Reason has her aids and resources, as well as her queries and her skepticisms. May not infinite love do what finite love cannot? Who shall dogmatically place limits upon such love? "Spirit," it has been truly said, "is where it energizes." As the light of a single sun illumines all places at once, finding its way into darkened rooms and prisoned alleys and sunken cellars, as well as pouring its full golden radiance wherever an open way is found, so we may conceive of a Spiritual Orb of Divine Love to consciously irradiate all receptive souls "so

[4] What follows as well as much of what precedes is an enlargement upon the latter part of Chapter VI. These problems are taken up again in the concluding chapter.

that," in the discerning words of Nathaniel Hawthorne (in describing Hepzibah's prayer), "just as there comes a warm sunbeam into every cottage window, so comes a lovebeam of God's care and pity, for every separate need." [5] Analogies must not be pressed too far; yet they serve, opportunely and legitimately, to aid the toiling efforts of intellect to grasp spiritual realities.

VI

Religion need be no helpless dupe, either of the skeptical mind or of hostile circumstance. It has resources of its own. Not only does religious experience tend to eventuate in ideas strong enough to meet opposing ideas, but it has a nearer, more intimate, and more spontaneous means of realization and expression—symbolism. Very close to experience, springing from its living tissue, as the flower springs from the plant, is this flower of symbolism—full of color, fragrance, and beauty. This is the key of the lines of Angelus Silesius:

> "The rose, that glads thine outer eye to see,
> Blossomed in God ere time began to be."

He who fails to value symbolism sadly lacks spiritual perception.

Who can justly estimate, much less describe, the wealth of meaning of religious symbolism, as it first arises in primitive religion—crude, childish, incoherent, sometimes well-

[5] *The House of Seven Gables.*

nigh revolting, yet touched with the divine grace of spontaneous art—and goes on developing in wealth and refinement, as religion develops? What a history has symbolism had, of use and abuse, elevation and degradation, perversion and purification! Enriched, sometimes encumbered, with images—suns, stars, swastikas, flowers, vines, wheels, crosses, rosaries, vestments, domes, arches, altars—it yet can never find enough to satiate the wealth of feeling and idea enwrapped in religion.[6] Such fecundity testifies to an underlying reality, of inestimable vitality, and significance.

Religious symbolism takes three chief forms: art, liturgy, language. In all of these it is the servant of experience, under the guidance of reason, and lighted by that divine lamp that irradiates all the chambers of the soul, imagination.

Yet, potent, expressive, and essential as is symbolism, when the vital flow of experience ebbs and recedes from it, only an empty shell is left, fit only to be swept away by iconoclast and Puritan; but as certain to return, in the springtide of the spirit, as are bud and leaf and blossom to the wintry and denuded garden. It is folly to think that symbolism can be dispensed with. Not even science can spare it. For language itself is dependent upon its treasure-trove.

[6] There is, of course, another conception of symbolism—represented *e.g.*, by Santayana in his *Reason in Religion*—in accordance with which symbol is not *less* than the thing symbolized but *more, i.e.*, having nothing behind it. Professor Hocking has met this travesty as follows: "Religion must be profoundly rooted in life in order to send its analogies throughout the structure of its great departments. But when the resemblance is taken for the substance of the original fact, it loses its own savor and stultifies the mind that accepts the substitution." Preface of *The Dilemma of Religious Knowledge*, by C. A. Bennett. Yale Press, 1931.

VII

How can the experience of God best express itself in the symbolism of language? Manifestly by *metaphor*. Metaphor is the nearest, most intimate, most realistic instrument possible for expressing religious experience. Idea, in the form of abstraction, following reflection, is less spontaneous and comes later and more slowly. Metaphor springs instinctively from experience and clothes it with a beautiful and communicable vesture of meaning.

What, then, is the best, truest, most expressive metaphor for the experience of God? Earnestly and ardently humanity has sought for this, trying all possible figures of speech, from Wind and Sun to those of the ninety-nine beautiful names of the Koran. Christianity, most intensely aware of Him of all faiths, has fixed upon the deeply tender, trustful, yet restrained term, chosen and filled with meaning by Jesus—"Father." Not that even this term is fully adequate. No metaphor is adequate. Yet how adequate it is—capturing and holding both mind and heart with the persistent fascination of inherent truth! "Yes," you say, "until today; our age has apparently outgrown it." On the other hand, perhaps we are failing to reach up to its height.

It is one of the sorry tragedies of religious misunderstanding that this incomparable metaphor (plainly *only* such) has been taken, not as a metaphor but as a description, a representation. Consequently, hosts of educated, not to say sophisticated, people have turned away from it, especially

in our day, as if Divine Fatherhood meant a "biological progenitor," or an old man with a flowing beard seated on the clouds. (It is doing a great injustice to such an artist as Michelangelo, *e.g.*, to suppose that when he pictured God thus he meant to do more than to use the symbolism that art calls for and warrants.) Only when we learn to take Divine Fatherhood as a symbol, a metaphor, and merely that, shall we learn how true it is to the nature and needs of the spirit, how genuine, expansive, and philosophically (because experientially and humanly) sound.[7] Rightly interpreted it stands for that Infinite Goodness (not for Infinite Good Nature) and self-imparting love which Christianity terms *Grace*.[8]

VIII

Granted that belief in God is deep-seated, widespread, human, well-grounded (as even psychology admits) as an experience, another challenge arises, a dread, a foreboding, which at the hands of the unco hesitant becomes an alarming objection, *viz.*, How do we know that this experience is not purely subjective, an illusion, a projection, a cowardly flight from reality? Such it is being pronounced, quietly by many, openly by some (*e.g.*, the commune of Russia)—religion "an opiate," God a myth. It is impossible to deny that this most recent and radical type of atheism has plausible grounds. The purely empirical psychology which is now

[7] *Cf.* the writer's *The Humanity of God*, Part I. Harper & Brothers, 1928.
[8] *Infra*, pp. 182-185.

in the saddle lends it, however unintentionally, academic strength and standing.

If this objection is to be met, and not evaded, the experience of God must be treated in the same searching, scientific way as any other experience. That is, it must be submitted to tests pertinent to such an experience. Briefly stated they are these: (1) Sharability (2) Perdurance (3) Inherent Value (4) Coherence (5) Rationality (6) Pragmatic Value. Apply these tests to the experience of God and it will be found, I believe, able to meet them all.[9] The scientific method is just as applicable in religion as anywhere else. Only let it be used with the kind of validating tests germane to this kind of experience.

IX

God a personal Presence, felt intuitively in such experiences as Beauty and Duty, becoming vivid in prayer and convincing in Christ, inescapable, though often but dimly felt, pervasive, yet never invasive—a Presence best named "Our Father who art in Heaven" (*i.e.*, not in some place above but in the spiritual realm), recognized as we recognize other persons by responsiveness of spirit—such evidence as this is entirely adequate for most minds. Yet not for all minds. For there are those who ask: If there is such an eternal *Emmanuel*—God with us—why do not all men recog-

[9] The present volume may be said to consist of repeated application of these tests.

nize Him, clearly, convincedly, undeniably? Why, too, are not those who believe they have experienced Him conscious of Him more constantly and reassuringly? These are recurring and poignant questions. (We have touched upon them in the preceding chapter.)

Paul has given us the kernel of an adequate answer in the penetrative second chapter of First Corinthians, in which he points out that spiritual realities "are spiritually discerned." In other words we may not live in servile dependence upon the husks of material reality and expect to find Him near. A sensation-drugged, hedonistic, pessimistic age can hardly expect to realize a spiritual Presence very vividly. But in the well-known words of Tertullian, "Whenever the soul comes to itself as out of a surfeit or a sleep and attains something of its natural soundness it speaks of God."

There can be, as Tertullian intimates, no merely passive experience of God. In order to be vital there is required the inner activism, the coming to oneself, of *faith*. This is not a defect in the experience but a virtue. Of all the defamed, debased, misrepresented activities of the human spirit, faith has suffered most. Now confused with credulity (that parody of religion), now identified with mere intellectual assent, now degraded into blind fanaticism, faith has been robbed, on every hand, of its true meaning and despoiled of its true splendor. *Faith is the valor of the soul.* It is that forthputting of the energy of the spirit, that girding of the self to go forward, upon the path of reason, which wins and holds the realm of values. No philosophy begins to sound the realm of truth which fails to recognize the place

and validity of faith, least of all a philosophy of Christianity.

This appeal to faith does not cancel the emphasis which has been laid upon the consciousness of God as a personal Presence, pervasive, ubiquitous, inescapable. Faith is not a substitute for experience. Rather does it confirm and implement experience. For no experience can be vital and adequate unless faith is in it, as an activity of the will. Nor can any system of ideas be other than intellectual scaffolding unless it rests on experience and, vitalized by faith, unifies reality and inspires and invigorates life.

Christian theology has of late been too timid in upholding the validity of faith, fearful lest it appeal to something childish, sentimental, intellectually and morally weak. It is time to correct this mistake. Nothing has better philosophical (as well as psychological) warrant than this normal, indispensable activity of the human spirit which Jesus called forth, Paul magnified, and Luther recovered, which Kant said he "removed knowledge in order to make room for," and which William James defended in *The Will to Believe*. We need a new and more adequate philosophy of faith as a valid factor not only in religion but in all spiritual activity—a faith not divorced from, much less antagonistic to, reason, but rather, wedded to *idea*, while growing out of, interpreting, and validating experience. To God as Idea, therefore, we now turn.

VIII

God As Idea

God is an experience. He is also an idea, a thought, or rather, He is That which gives rise to thought concerning Himself—*i.e.*, to theology. Endless confusion arises from the failure to make clear the distinction between experience and idea. Many talk glibly about the idea of God who know practically nothing personally of the experience; while many who have the experience are quite unable to give it adequate conceptual form and expression.

I

The experience of God is not, however, pure feeling. It has within it, as all reliable experience has, an *a priori* factor. It possesses not only emotional and volitional but cognitive content. Its cognition is, as we have seen, primarily, intuition.[1] Intuition is direct and immediate rational insight,

[1] Ideas consist of (1) structural ideas and (2) interpretive ideas. The former inhere in experience, the latter are brought in to interpret and relate it to other forms of experience. *Cf.* Chapter III, pp. 40-42.

while the interpretation of experience in the form of ideas is a deliberate, logical, and progressive process. The process, and its result, is essential to adequate knowledge; yet ratiocination is secondary to the intuitional apprehension of the truth itself.

Experience first and foremost, then interpretation; the experience of God, then the idea of God: this means that religion is prior, in content and value, and theology secondary and ancillary. To have made this distinction clear and effective and established this order of evaluation is the chief advance of modern theology.[2] Had it only been made earlier much confusion would have been saved. Not, of course, that it is wholly new. Even Confucius anticipated the true relation of theoretical to experiential and practical truth in his saying: "He who knows what comes first in life and what comes last is very near the Way." [3] For theology thus at length to get nearer to the Way, the Logos, the true Order of values and relations—this is genuine progress.

Yet even thinking people do not yet make either the distinction between religion and theology, or the consequent comparative evaluation. Consequently both the experience and the idea of God suffer. No clarification in the field of religion is more imperative than this. How wholesome it would be if from the housetops of all our theological schools and churches—and universities as well—might be proclaimed:

[2] To Schleiermacher must be attributed the first definite statement and explication of the principle, followed by Ritschl, Coleridge, F. D. Maurice, H. B. Smith, W. N. Clarke, William Adams Brown, and many others.

[3] Manifestly *first* and *last* refer to the valuational, not the temporal, order.

"Ideas of God should not be taken for God. Theology is not religion." Nevertheless, ideas of God are vital, and theology in its true place is essential.

II

There are two ways of seeking to find and understand God, two directions, either of which may be followed. One is to look *within,* into the depths of our own nature and consciousness, and the other is to look *without,* at the structure and operation of the cosmos. It would be wrong to say that one of these must be chosen at the expense of the other —for there is no reason why both may not be used—nor can they be entirely detached; but one or the other of these approaches must be taken as primary and formative. The personalist is persuaded that it is only by looking primarily *within,* into the mind and heart of man, that God can be found as experience, and hence interpreted as idea.

> "Not where the wheeling systems darken,
> And our benumbed conceiving soars!—
> The drift of pinions, would we hearken,
> Beats at our own clay-shuttered doors." [4]

This is an ancient issue, ever arising afresh in the course of human thought, and it is before us in a new and pressing form today. Among those who are looking primarily to the universe for God, under the stimulus of modern science,

[4] Francis Thompson, *"The Kingdom of God," Poems,* p. 293. The Century Co., 1932.

certain believe that they have found Him there as a "Principle of Integration," a Process, which in human relations becomes "an Interaction" and "an Order of Possibility"; while those of us who look within for the way to God discover Him (or so we believe) as Personal Presence, as Thou, "closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet."

I would not exaggerate the contrast between these two ways of finding God, or deny the relation between them; but it seems to me clear that they are not of equal validity. Two things awoke deep reverence in the mind of Kant, the starry heavens above and the moral law within, but it was upon the latter, and not the former, that he built the postulate of God. It behooves us to choose, for our ruling idea of God, between Process and Person, between "a personality-producing Universe" and a universe-producing Personality.[5] This may appear to be as negligible a distinction as that which for many minds constitutes the difference between Athanasianism and Arianism; yet it might mean as much as that to Christianity, should the issue become as pronounced.

III

That which prompts the efforts of the proponents of God as a Cosmic Process is, I take it, not only to make contact with Modern Science but also to find some way of relief from the problem of Evil, which is arousing such bitter and unrestrained irritation in our day. One cannot but sympathize with this motive. Yet this mode of escape is a vain

[5] *Cf. The Process of Religion* (Miles H. Krumbine, Editor), Chapter X, "Theological Contexts and Patterns," p. 198. The Macmillan Co., 1933.

one. The problem cannot be solved by resorting either to an impersonal God or to a finite God. For the resort to an impersonal God removes the blame for evil from a Creative God only to lay it on that part of the cosmos which is not integrative, or which is disintegrative, and that means a virtual dualism; and the resort to a finite God gives us an impotent God struggling by our side against evil; and that involves a still deeper dualism.[6] To what conclusions radical dualism leads, history makes plain. Once posit Evil in any form as an essential element of the Nature of Things and you have a disrupted universe as well as a depleted God.

The alternative is by no means to regard Evil as a form of good, or good in disguise, or negligible, but rather as an interloper, an alien, entering through a gateway that may not be closed (for that would shut out also a priceless good), *i.e.*, the gateway of *freedom. The way to find light on the problem of evil seems to lie, not in abandoning belief in Divine Personality but in carrying it farther and deeper; for the more purely personal God is conceived to be, the more He will value and seek to induce personality in others, and apparently the only way to further this is by promoting the exercise of freedom, even though through freedom comes evil.*

Bad as this world of ours is, reddened with natural evil and blackened with moral evil, it may be that, after all, it is "the best possible world"—not for happiness but for *freedom,* and hence for the development of personality. Away down

[6] A clear distinction should be drawn between this *Essential Dualism* and the *Duality* consonant with Unity.

in the lower forms of life freedom (in the form of conation) apparently begins, like a spring bubbling up through the crust of determinism, manifesting itself in urges, impulses, conations, choices, becoming ever stronger and more intelligent in the higher animal and emergent man, until at last, in the higher man, it comes to its full fruition in that crowning glory of all life—the freedom of *self-won, self-determining personality*.[7]

Yet at what fearful cost of struggle, bloodshed, pain, disease, death, in the natural world, and war, violence, crime, unutterable misery, and indescribable agony in the human world has this been brought about! If this is the only pathway by which personality could have come, is it worth the cost? Who can answer? For myself I can only say that although I stand aghast sometimes at the thought of the suffering and shame and evil which nature and history disclose, I have not the omniscience, nor let me add the audacity, to join with the literary and philosophical cynics of our day who charge with utter futility and damnable cruelty a world that has produced personality, or to predict for humanity only a desperate and hopeless future. The philosopher of loyalty and of "the Beloved Community," Josiah Royce, seems to me truer to the heart of life when, at the close of the first volume of his great work *The World and the Individual,* after frankly facing many of the most difficult problems of life, he exclaims: "Arise, then, freeman, stand forth in thy world. It is God's world. It is also thine."

[7] *Cf.* "Process and Purpose" by the present writer, *The Hibbert Journal,* Vol. XXXII, No. 2, January, 1934.

IV

The process of integration in Nature, *i.e.*, the "whole-making" process—of which General Smuts, *e.g.*, has pertinently made so much—is indeed a strikingly significant component in the evolutionary movement. It may well be regarded as a fresh disclosure of the working of that Logos "without whom is not anything being made." (It may be pointed out in passing that the verb for creation [egeneto] used in the prologue of the Fourth Gospel is a distinct affirmation of the developmental or evolutionary process. It follows that if in the Scopes trial the appeal had been made to the first chapter of *John,* instead of to *Genesis*—and surely this is far more truly *the* biblical teaching of creation—a strong argument might have been made to show that the Bible teaches the principle of evolution.) Why, then, if integration is conceived as a Divine process, is it so inadequate a definition of God, especially if, as Dean Shailer Mathews holds, it means "personal relations with personality-creating, personality-responsive, personality-conceived activities of the Universe"? [8] What is the objection then, to saying: This is God, and the only God we need?—instead of saying, Surely God is in this activity and we knew it not?

The defect of taking integration as God, as I see it, lies here: Integration (as a process) is a revelation of God and not God Himself. Process is a means, a method, not a finality apart from the mind that uses it. In other words

[8] *The Growth of the Idea of God. Cf.* pp. 219, 228, 229. The Macmillan Co., 1931.

Process is Logos, not Theos. Process may well be regarded as the work of God as immanent; but immanence without transcendence, like works without faith, is vain. The process of integration without the purpose of integration is meaningless. It fails to account for emergent man becoming a person. A "personality-producing universe" can come only from a Person who is both immanent in, and transcends, the universe.[9]

Only personality can be, consciously, both immanent and transcendent. While it is true, as Pure Realism from Plato and Aristotle to the present has held, that *Form* may be both transcendent and immanent; yet it is not consciously so. And without conscious purpose there can be no true creativeness, hence no Logos universe, no cosmos. You (to illustrate) are immanent in your body and in everything that you create, but you also transcend all that you create and can put yourself into successive and ever finer creative acts. In an infinitely larger way God may be conceived as ever giving Himself creatively to His universe, and imparting Himself to men, yet still remaining complete in Himself, being as Whittier has sung of Him:

> "Immortal Love, forever full, forever flowing free,
> Forever whole, forever shared, a never-ebbing sea."

Thus the union of transcendence and immanence in God becomes ever clearer and more illuminative the farther we

[9] *Cf.* "Immanence-Transcendence" by the writer, *The Journal of Philosophy*, April 9, 1931.

see into the essential nature and relations of Supreme Personality.

V

Looking within, then, rather than without, there is to be found in ourselves something prescient and promiseful, that cannot be discovered in the external world, which furnishes the clue to the nature of God, *i.e.*, that unique entity (strange yet familiar, best known yet inexplicable)—source of all our knowing yet still largely unexplored, finite, limited, imperfect, yet partaking of the infinite and eternal and endowed with inestimable possibilities—selfhood, soul, personality.

Man the "image of God," is an old and oft-repeated article of faith, the truth of which we are grasping in new forms today. Can it be so? Can God in truth be not only within us but in some way like ourselves? Then, indeed, is He no stranger to us.

> "I stood within the heart of God;
> It seemed a place that I had known:
> (I was blood-sister to the clod,
> Blood-brother to the stone.)
> I found my love and labor there,
> My house, my raiment, meat and wine,
> My ancient rage, my old despair—
> Yea, all things that were mine." [10]

It is difficult to get away from the statement of *Philonous*

[10] Song of Pandora in William Vaughan Moody's "The Firebringer." *Poems and Poetic Dramas,* Houghton, Mifflin Co., Boston.

in one of Bishop Berkeley's famous *Three Dialogues:* "For all the notion I have of God is obtained by reflecting on my own soul, heightening its powers, and removing its imperfections." The intellect shies at first at this conclusion, questions it, doubts it, but cannot defeat it and at length accepts it. It has been man's most daring yet deliberate reliance that he indeed bears God's image, however defaced. Yet how unsure, fleeting, tremulous, was this conviction until . . . One came so human yet so "full of grace and truth" that beholding him men saw God in him and believed, rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

VI

The idea of God as being, in some very real way, like man, simple as it is, is as immeasurable as it is germinal. It expands and enlarges, especially when attached to Jesus Christ, until it takes in all heights and depths of being. Starting with the self, as did Augustine and Descartes, as the one certain reality, what vistas open! This self, this *a priori* knower, this subject-object, this constructive thinker, who not only discovers "the given" but imposes his own concepts and categories upon all things—conscious of his own immeasurable potencies and possibilities while realizing his imperfection and directing his gaze toward "the Other" and Perfect—this paradox of paradoxies, man, at his worst beneath the brute, at his best above the angel, is not too mean to pre-figure God Himself. A "reed" he is, yet, as

Pascal called him, "a thinking reed" within which is borne the Promethean fire.

To man, then, and not to the external world (which is what *it* is, in part at least, because *he* is what he is) must we look for our knowledge of One whose "thoughts are not our thoughts nor His ways our ways" yet whose thoughts and ways are reflected in us. Here, in personality, as George A. Gordon has well said, "is the key of our world and our universe or there is none." [11]

VII

Is there, then, no revelation of God in nature? Is nothing to be found *without?* Is this mighty Cosmos, so majestic, so marvelous, so puzzling, and provocative, yet so rewarding to the observant and pursuant mind, alien to God? Is it proceeding on its stupendous, heedless way, uncontrolled, ungoverned, undirected? It may seem necessary to the minds of many today to assert this, and thus to cut off all connection between God and Nature, but such is not "the mind of Christ." Christian faith has never been willing to let the universe abdicate what is conceived to be its revelatory mission.[12]

Nor is this the direction in which the philosophy of science seems at present to be moving. There is nothing, in fact, more striking and full of significance for religion, in the widening purview of our day, than the recent trend toward

[11] Quoted in the writer's *Personality and the Christian Ideal,* Preface, p. vii.

[12] This subject is discussed more at length in Chapter IX.

theism arising out of the new physics and the inferences from evolving evolution. It would hardly be an exaggeration to affirm that the theory of relativity and its implications means, indirectly, more to theology even than to science, paradoxical as that assertion may sound. *For relativity implies a new and imperial centrality given to Mind.* All measurements, calculations, conclusions, are relative. Relative to what? To him who measures—primarily to his body but ultimately to his mind. Man is at once physical and super-physical, swept physically into every form of motion which he originates, or to which he becomes attached, yet poised mentally in a transcendent sphere of his own, from which he surveys all change and vicissitude with pure intelligence, as one who "contemplates all time and all existence" from within, and yet from above, the temporal and spatial realm.

VIII

Materialism is dead, though its ghost haunts us still. Every scientist, philosopher, theologian—may we not add (with some reservations) every magazine reader—knows this. Yet how little has the full force of the fact come home to us! When Gen. Jan Smuts, as spokesman of organized science, pronounced the obsequies of materialism in his presidential address at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Liverpool in 1931 he gave utterance to a scientific consensus whose consequences will be felt long and fruitfully, in many directions—religious and philosophical as well as scientific.

Yet the demise of materialism is by no means all that has been happening of late, in the field of science, that concerns the spiritual life. Relativity, as has been indicated, has opened up new dimensions, new perspectives, a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth—*Mind*. The adventurous human spirit has entered upon a fresh area of exploration.

> "We are the first that ever burst
> Into this silent sea."

Mind is now surveying, as never before, its own hitherto unrealized resources. The "laws of nature" are coming to be seen not so much as physical laws as mental concepts. "No one can deny," declares Eddington, "that mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience and all else is remote inference." [13] "Remote inference"—what idealist philosophy has dared say more than that? World-stuff as "mind-stuff," is another way in which the venturesome physicist is reconceiving the universe. "The electron," asserted Wildon Carr, "is ultimately therefore a geometrical concept." [14] This being the statement of a philosopher, not of a scientist, must doubtless be taken with due care; but note the admirable philosophic reserve of the statement. Dr. Carr did not say that the electron is *primarily* (or "nothing but") a philosophical concept, but that *ultimately* it is such. Can that be successfully questioned? "Yet has not the electron been weighed?" it will be asked. Yes; but by what? By the invisible scales of *mind*.

[13] *The Nature of the Physical Universe*, p. 273. The Macmillan Co., 1929.
[14] *The Unique Status of Man*, p. 166. The Macmillan Co., 1928.

The following statement by the cryptic oracle of the philosophy of Organism, Professor Whitehead, is full of import: "The true method of philosophical construction is to frame a scheme of ideas, the best that one can, and unflinchingly to explore the interpretation of experience in terms of that scheme." [15] This sounds strangely arbitrary, neglectful of "brute facts" so-called, and strikingly in keeping with a statement of Santayana who remarks, "The picture of the natural world framed by common sense and science" is "only a picture." [16] "Only a picture?" cries Common Sense, dismayed, "why, we thought it was agreed long ago that science gives us exact and verifiable facts! Truly this is an age of transition." Call it, rather, an age of transformation.

The recent tendency toward subjectivism on the part of some scientists seems to go so far as to ascribe sole constructive agency to the individual mind. It suggests universal eclecticism, if not solipsism. This appearance is heightened as we find Sir James Jeans declaring that every one carries his own *ether* about with him, as a frame of reference, and then, recalling Eddington's paradoxical statement, adds that about half of the physicists believe there is an ether and the rest do not and that they all mean practically the same thing.[17]

Much of this surprising philosophical idealism on the part of contemporary scientists is, indeed, quite too subjective.

[15] *Process and Reality,* Preface. The Macmillan Co., 1929.
[16] *The Realm of Essence.* London, Constable & Co., 1928.
[17] *The Mysterious Universe,* pp. 111, 112.

It needs to be qualified by some such transcendental realism as one finds in Husserl's Phenomenology. For both experience and reason require a duality, something besides the mind and its structural forms, some entity which mind has over against itself, a "given," a "stuff," if you like, however tenuous it may be, to work upon. Interlaced though it be with essences, "eternal objects," ideas, this other-than-mind cannot possibly be spared if we are to have a rational universe.

IX

Moreover, to stop with the finite mind is to limit the possible extent of Mind, as such, quite too closely even for the scientist. There is a striking passage in Jeans' *The Mysterious Universe* in which, after quoting the classic words of Bishop Berkeley, "All the choir of heaven and furniture of earth, in a word all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any existence without the mind," he continues: "Modern Science seems to me to lead, by a very different road, to a not altogether dissimilar conclusion. . . . It does not matter whether objects 'exist in my mind, or that of any other created spirit' or not; their objectivity arises from their subsisting 'in the mind of some Eternal Spirit.' " [18] The mind of an Eternal Spirit: is this the goal to which science is directing us in these adventurous days?

In truth, however, there is no real occasion for surprise at this outcome; for it is the most natural thing possible for

[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

untrammeled minds, stimulated by researches in the field of science, to break through mechanism into mind, finding new dimensions, fresh frames of reference, mental "intentionalities" replete with philosophical and religious implications.[19]

X

Yet let no one leap to the hasty conclusion—because Mind is being reinstated by speculative inferences from natural science—that Personal Theism is thereby fully reestablished. For Mind is but one aspect, or element, of personality. If God were Mind only and not also, as Plato held, "the Good," or as Jesus called Him, "Our Father," or the Johannine writer, "Love," Theism would be far from truly personal. Thus we are brought back again to look within, and to human society and human history, for that deeper and fuller interpretation of God which nature cannot give. Human experience alone is an adequate source from which to draw the worthiest and most reliable idea of God.

XI

The experience of God and the idea of God—these are intimately related and mutually complementary. Experience requires thought to interpret and confirm it; thought requires experience for its data. And yet how often and deeply experience is harassed and disturbed by thought, and

[19] Similarly, J. S. Haldane, representing Biology, asserts that "our perceived world is . . . but the embodiment of our personal interest" and refers to the universe as "the progressive manifestation of God." *The Philosophical Basis of Biology*. Doubleday, Doran, 1931.

thought disciplined and brought back from its too distant ranging by experience! We are prone to think that it would be ideal if we could only experience God constantly as Presence, Love, Father, without being troubled by waspish intellectual questions and doubts. Yet, would it? "I have never had any doubts," said a complacent listener to one who was dwelling upon the inescapability of doubt. "Don't you wish you had!" was his reply. Not that all minds doubt, or need to doubt; but for many minds this is the only pathway to truth.

There are, in fact, two kinds of doubt. One is due to fear and congeals and paralyzes the soul; that is harmful. The other is due to the spirit of enquiry and stimulates and ultimately deepens the spirit of certainty; this is wholesome. The dialectic of religion runs thus: *Experience—thought; reality—idea; intuition—interpretation.* It is thus we arrive at successive syntheses. It is a wholesome process, without which both mind and heart would stagnate. "Then welcome each rebuff that turns *faith's* smoothness rough!"—for thereby experience deepens and faith grows stronger.

XII

He that is least in the kingdom of religious experience is greater than he that is greatest in the kingdom of ideas—unless *his* heart also is that of a little child. Yet, whatever its difficulties, it is good to think *about* God, as well as *of* God, even if thought, beyond a certain point, is baffled. It is well, and necessary, to try to give rational expression to

experience, even though a perfect adjustment of the idea of God to the experience of God is never reached.

Paul—who, when his thought is better understood, will be ranked among the very greatest minds in the entire history of philosophy—stated the nature of human knowledge of God with incomparable insight and lucidity when he said: "We know in part." In part God is unknown. In part He is known. In part our knowledge of Him is always changing and expanding; and in part it is anchored and secure.

As experienced, God is real, in the same way that oneself and other selves are real. As idea, He is far from being encompassable, yet is He not unknown. It is not in keeping either with science, or philosophy, or true theology, to draw restrictive lines about the conception of Him. I, for one, am more than ready to assent to Plotinus, as well as to the best of Oriental religious thought, in holding that, in the higher reaches of His being, God is beyond thought as well as definition. In the outmost ranges of His nature, He may well be super-personal. But it is not possible to have communion with "the super-personal personality," any more than with "the principle of integration" or "order of possibility," or "absolutely transcendent value."

In order to be true to experience, and reason as well, we can hardly do other than conclude that, however far above purpose God may be, He is also purposeful, and however far above personality, He is also personal, and however far beyond consciousness, He is also conscious, and however far beyond fatherhood He may be He is also vitally, intimately, dependably, "Our Father in the Spirit Realm."

IX

Nature the Matrix and Medium of Personality

HITHERTO the modern man has viewed Nature mainly as the cosmic structure, or "extrapolation," constructed by Natural Science. Immediately the priority of personal realities and values is recognized, however, Nature, as we have seen,[1] takes on another aspect which lifts it into new meaning and significance. The physical world becomes that necessary *non-self,* or *neutral other,* which serves as the implement that the self needs, at once as its foil and furtherance, the anvil on which to beat out its designs, the "stuff" upon which to work, "the not-self without which no self were." [2] Regarded (1) as furnishing a training school for personality, (2) as a treasury of symbols for the communication of persons, (3) as a means for individual self-expression and (4) as a medium for the self-revelation of the Supreme

[1] Chapter VIII, pp. 125 *ff.*

[2] Robert Bridges, *The Testament of Beauty,* Book IV, 1440. The Oxford University Press, 1930.

Person, the meaning and value which Nature has for us as persons reveal themselves in a new light.

I

This interpretation of Nature as not only the matrix but the medium, and thus the ally and instrument, of personality is by no means, however, as clear and unchallenged as might appear. For the natural world has a double relation, on the one hand to the body, and on the other to the mind and spirit, which greatly complicates our converse with it. Hence, unless we take possession of Nature in behalf of something higher than herself she is likely to take possession of us.

This has led, in fact, to two contrasted attitudes, on the part of sensitive minds, toward Nature—one of distrust and aversion, the other of confidence and affection. Not seldom have thoughtful minds been troubled with the question: Does Nature contribute to the enrichment of personal life? Does the enjoyment of sky and earth and companionship with growing things and living creatures aid men to be better and happier? Or does Nature seduce us, alienate us from each other and from the higher life?

Unwelcome as this latter possibility may be, it must be reckoned with, for it has been the suspicion of not a few earnest souls, who have turned away from Nature as from a temptress, as well as the attitude of some who have been so absorbed with God, or with humanity, as to be comparatively blind to Nature.

We cannot but honor such indifference when it is due to absorption in human service, or to refusal to pay homage to Nature, as when Francis Thompson addresses her thus:

> "I am not of thy fools
> Who goddess thee with impious flatteries sweet."

But when this indifference is owing, as is so often the case, to mere dullness and inability to appreciate natural beauty it is not so admirable, as when the old lady in the north of England replied to a traveler who remarked on the beauty of the scene from her cottage, "Ees, but it doesna' trouble *us* much."

II

Those who have distrusted Nature as luring them away from God and duty have as a rule been sincere and upright souls whose witness cannot be impatiently set aside. Socrates, walking up the bed of the river Ilissus with Phædrus that summer day long ago (as pictured by Plato) told his comrade that the reason he did not go out oftener into the country was that he was too much interested in the men on the streets of Athens. Yet he (or was it Plato?) was so impressed by the beauty of the riverside and the summer sights and sounds that when the two laudators of Love regretfully left the shade of the plane-tree under which they had been reclining to turn homeward, the Sage of the City Streets uttered the memorable prayer, "Beloved Pan and all ye gods that haunt this place (which might be translated,

'God of the Open Air and all sweet influences of Nature') make me beautiful *within!*" An inner sense of beauty incited and enhanced by outer beauty—is not this the true and normal influence of Nature?

I have read, somewhere, of a medieval mystic who, walking along the shore of a beautiful mountain lake, would not permit his eyes to rest upon it lest it draw his thoughts away from God. This represents the extreme of anti-æsthetic renunciation and is hardly characteristic of the mystical attitude as such, for unnumbered mystics have found Nature lending wings to their love of God and man.

We have yet to answer *why* those who fear the enjoyment of Nature, as hostile to the higher life of the spirit, cherish such a dread. A marked instance of such distrust is that of William Blake, the more strange because he was so intense a lover of beauty. In the year 1825, when Blake was sixty-eight years of age, Wordsworth's friend, Crabb Robinson, after a visit to the eccentric poet and artist, wrote as follows:

> I read to him Wordworth's incomparable ode, which he heartily enjoyed. But he repeated, "I fear Wordsworth loves Nature, and Nature is the work of the Devil. The Devil is in us as far as we are nature." [3]

What is the explanation of this singular suspicion of Nature on the part of Blake and less discerning minds?

It lies in the fact, no doubt, that Nature so readily lends herself to pagan attitudes and immoral indulgences. One

[3] George McLean Harper, *William Wordsworth*, Vol. II, p. 341. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916.

may more easily glimpse the great god Pan piping among the reeds than lift his eyes to the hills whence cometh help. Nature invites some minds, all of us perhaps at times, to a kind of apostasy. The hilltops of Baal, the groves of Astarte, Merry Mount beyond the precincts of Puritan Boston, and many another beautiful spot, have lent themselves to dissipation and revelry, pagan through and through. There is today an increasing number of superficial devotees of Nature who resort to her, not to find rest and inspiration but

> "To bruise the herb and crush the grape
> And bask and batten in the woods."

Such unrestrained license and animalism reveals to what low levels Nature enjoyment may descend.

Yet this is not Nature's truer influence. Matthew Arnold found in her a call to be himself. Looking off upon the ocean at night from shipboard he wrote:

> "And with joy the stars perform their shining
> And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
> For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
> All the fever of some differing soul.
>
> Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
> In what state God's other works may be,
> In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
> These attain the mighty life you see.
>
> O Air-born voice! long since severely clear,
> A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear—
> 'Resolve to be thyself; and know that he
> Who finds himself loses his misery.'"

"A Lover of Nature," declared that ardent devotee of hers,

Thoreau, "is preeminently a lover of man," [4] and so extremely careful a thinker as Kant affirmed: "I maintain that to take an *immediate interest* in the beauty of Nature (not merely to have taste in judgment) is always the mark of a good soul." [5]

III

Modern science, viewed superficially, seems to have banished the friendly and familiar aspect of Nature and left us, like homeless castaways, in a waste and heartless universe. After listening to a graphic lecture upon the New Astronomy the writer soon thereafter went up into the high sierra and for a month slept out, night after night, under the stars. It was impossible to banish the story I had heard of their awful distances, their overwhelming dimensions, their titanic gyrations, and the terrific celestial tempests that take place in that realm of apparent calm. Yet, as I lay under their benign and restful influence, watched them moving along their stately pathways, and saw them pale before the light of the day-star, the sense of order and beauty and peace which they have always given stole gently back upon my consciousness.

Was this a cowardly rejection of wider knowledge, a relapse from science to superstition? [6] Should one tell him-

[4] *The Heart of Thoreau's Journals,* p. 139. Houghton, Mifflin Co.

[5] *Critique of Judgment,* §42.

[6] It would be foolish to disparage the service which natural science has rendered, not only for our material welfare but also, through its spirit and method, for the development and progress of the personal order. I am concerned only with false inferences and dangers which attend science and especially the assumption, so often made, of its dominance over other human interests. For a fuller discussion of the subject the reader may refer to an article of mine, "The Passing of the Scientific Era," in *The Century Magazine* (August, 1929), in which this viewpoint is presented at greater length.

self that the sky is only limitless space, sprinkled with waxing and waning universes, a knowledge that should free the mind of all childish ideas of creative and protective love? The soundness of this attitude is open to doubt. There is no need to let science rob us of either poetry or religion. Walter Lippmann considers that one is still sadly immature until he has learned to heed the "vast indifferences" of the stars.[7] By what token? Indifference is a mental attitude, not an objective reality. The stars themselves are neither friendly nor indifferent, although either friendliness or indifference may be read into them. Why, then, should it be *indifference?* Was Dante quite misled when he sang of "the love that moves the sun and all the stars"? It is not necessary to discard as worthless Dante's astronomy—imaginative and personalistic as it is. Possibly it has as much to contribute to the understanding of Ultimate Reality as the Copernican or Newtonian, or that of the astronomer of today.

IV

We are getting from natural science, however illegitimately and unintentionally, some very questionable and misleading notions of what constitutes reality. Most people, if you asked them what the stars *really are,* would reply (in effect), as tutored by the astronomer, that they are vast masses of heated atomic matter revolving in space, distant from us, some of them, thousands of "light years." By this is meant, supposedly, that if the astronomer could get

[7] *A Preface to Morals.* The Macmillan Co., 1929.

near enough to one of them to examine it that is what it would prove to be. No doubt he is right; but there is no likelihood whatever that any mortal will ever have this experience, unless indeed *ether planes* are invented that will take the daring and breathless investigator outside the stratospheres that surround the earth. Meanwhile stars are no more really "sidereal cinders" than they are the steady and shining indices of a universe of order and majesty, illuminating the mystery and depth of Being which the sky symbolizes.

It is no evidence of obscurantism to affirm that stars are in fact *as really* objects of sublime beauty and spiritual meaning as they are members of galactic systems in various stages of nebular development and disintegration. Not that what the astronomer says is not most true and pertinent regarded from his selected framework of observation and using the concepts and categories employed in his "universe of discourse." Yet he who hears in imagination the music of the spheres and sees in the heavens the work of "an Almighty Hand" has equal rights to consideration with the astronomer who describes them as chemically constituted matter spatially and physically determined by natural forces. *It is a late but wise discovery that there may be different aspects of reality according to the framework selected.* If one's chosen pattern is that of value, or meaning, he has as much right to apply it to the universe, provided his conceptual system is self-consistent, sustained by an adequate body of "facts," and coherent with other truth-systems, as the scientist has to apply the mechanistic pattern. Only

each must be true to logical principles, remembering that as one swallow does not make a summer, so two facts (or forty) do not make a summary.

V

The real question is not: Is the Universe friendly? but, is there Some One within and above it who is friendly? If the consciousness of a homelike universe, which comes singing into the heart of childhood through the familiar cadences of the Twenty-third Psalm, fortified by the Sermon on the Mount, should have to yield to the disillusioning occasioned by natural science, then science would be a doubtful boon, whatever its contributions to the sum of human knowledge. But there is no sufficient ground for charging science with doing us this disfavor. It is a questionably exclusive interpretation of the findings of science that has disillusioned us. "The man of science who is not seeking for expression but for a fact to be expressed merely studies nature as a dead language. I pray for such inward experience as will make nature significant," wrote Thoreau.[8] "Such inward experience as will make nature significant"—that is what the personalist seeks. So far as science helps him toward this experience, well and good, but science alone can neither give it to him nor rob him of it.

Does the change from a log cabin universe to a palace universe mean that it can no longer be to us a home? That is a needless inference. "We are citizens of no mean city!"

[8] *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

exclaims Sir James Jeans, looking out with kindled emotion upon the "vast indifference" of the starry heavens.[9] We do not need to succumb to what has been called "the intimidations of astronomy." On the contrary, increasing the extension of space means widening the exercise of the mind. To shrink, with Herbert Spencer, at the thought of infinite space really means to fear the capacities of one's own mind —a much more reasonable fear than that of space, but hardly called for.

A palace may be as true a home as a log cabin, under one condition—that love is in it. But can we continue to think of the cosmos (including the earth) as a love-made, love-lit universe, a true home of souls? That is the issue. Many things seem to answer in the affirmative. Here are beauty, life, mutuality, order. Yet many things seem to deny it. Here are disaster, suffering, struggle for existence, death. The old problem of Natural Evil again presents itself.

VI

Between conflicting conclusions, which should one adopt? Science as such has nothing to say about meaning. Nor is it possible to gather all the facts and make an induction from them. If to look upon the beneficence and beauty of Nature as a revelation of Divine Love has as much to support as to refute it (and it seems to me to have more), it is not irrational to let faith, rather than doubt, decide the issue.[10] For

[9] *The Mysterious Universe.* The Macmillan Co., 1931.

[10] "What I cannot understand is how anyone who looks out on the world as a whole, in time and in space, and sees all the beauties of nature about him and the marvels of goodness and beauty men have already achieved, can doubt for an instant that a power of incalculable goodness must be at work at the heart of the universe to have produced such results." Sir Francis Younghusband, *The Hibbert Journal,* January, 1930, p. 220.

we cannot avoid taking an attitude, one way or the other, as to whether to "accept the universe" or mistrust and malign it. As William James pointed out in his *The Will to Believe,* religious agnosticism amounts to a negative decision. "But beware of wish-thinking!" warns the idol-smashing psychologist. Yes, if it is irrational but not if it is in accordance with reason. Rational wish-thinking led Abraham to "the Land of Promise," inspired Plato to write the *Republic* and Jesus to found the Kingdom of God, took Columbus across the Atlantic and the Pilgrims to Plymouth, and has inspired all great discoveries and achievements. Rational wish-thinking is rational faith, and faith alone ventures, discovers, achieves. There is a philosophy undergirding faith which has not yet been adequately worked out. Faith is not credulity, nor the denial of facts but the choice of the best and most rational interpretation of facts and of the way to discover and create new facts.

We have a right to read love, not *into* the universe, but *in* it, because love is in us, and we are of Nature, on one side of our being, and Nature is of us. St. Francis, Nature-lover as he was, was no "fop-o'-fields," any more than was Emerson or Wordsworth or John Muir. Comradeship is the key to Nature. "Love all God's creatures, the whole universe, and each grain of sand," said that strangely impressive character in Tolstoi's *War and Peace,* Brother Arseniou, "love every leaflet, every ray of God's light, love the beasts, love the plants, love every creature." There is nothing in science to make that attitude unreasonable.

Not to natural science alone should we go for the full meaning and value of Nature. It affords us descriptive,

mensural, and useful knowledge of Nature, but leaves it detached and unevaluated; for science as such (as has now become so clear) knows nothing either of meaning or of value.[11] The sun that warms my body may be ninety-three million miles distant, but when it rises over the hills (what unscientific terms we all, even the scientists, still use!) and throws a beam of gold toward me and I feel its genial warmth and observe the glow of its beauty, it is a very real and friendly sun, and nearer in its effects than even the clothing through which its rays penetrate. Its astronomical distance from "this sidereal cinder of ours" thus becomes far less real to me than its æsthetic and spiritual value and its thermal nearness. To be sure, if it were very much nearer it would scorch me to a cinder. But—well, it isn't. It is there and I am here.

It is the relation between us that matters most. The question is: does this relation *mean* anything, beyond its purely empirical nature? Has it any trans-physical, personal significance? It is arbitrary to shut this out. One who has found *within* the key to the world *without* will greet sun and star, meadow and mountain, tree and flower, as Emerson greeted rhodora in the Concord woods, with the joyous recognition: "The selfsame Power that brought me here brought you!"

VII

Let one take Nature as comrade—rather than as foe, or goddess, or mere Motion, or concourse of electrons—and he will find himself richly rewarded, caressed by the

[11] Other than practical.

summer breeze, braced by the winter gale, soothed by the companionable brook, sung to from the leafy tree-top and cheered by the wayside flower. St. Francis was wisely catholic when he took Nature into comradeship by personifying her, calling water "sister" and fire "brother," and making friends of bird and beast. Nature is full of meanings beyond herself, to one who comes to her in this spirit of understanding affection. How can one look long and thoughtfully at sunshine, or snowflake, or star-beam—be he the veriest of realists—and not become, for the moment at least, a mystic? "Fancies, all," says the practicalist. Perhaps; but what are fancies to common sense may be food to spirit. One gets potatoes and onions from the soil, as has often been remarked, another flowers and poems. Both are legitimate products.

Nature is replete with spiritual symbolism. Stars radiate serenity; mountains administer moral majesty. Every virtue has its kindred grain and fibre in tree and shrub and every grace its correspondent flower. Does not the rose spell "love," and the lily "purity," and the violet "humility"? Pansies, are they not "for thoughts," and rosemary "for remembrance"? Why is it that we find these moving analogues and homologues in Nature? Simply by arbitrarily putting them there? Not so. These are not fancies but deep-lying and joyous discoveries of ourselves in Nature and Nature in ourselves.

Thus accepted, Nature becomes fontal of inner life and meaning. Very subtly and formatively does this influence affect a sensitive mind, even from childhood. In an auto-

biographical sketch entitled "The Multitude and the Solitude," read to the Berkeley Club in 1900, Dr. John Knox McLean described his debt to Nature in boyhood as follows:

> The tuition of Nature upon the country child is deep, penetrating, and abiding. I, myself, knew a boy, a very little boy, not like Wordsworth's, but tow-headed, freckle-faced, unpromising, who began life a stranger to all reverence. . . . But one day there came a sudden burst of illumination. It came about in this wise. The boy's legs had grown, but were still short. He had come to know pasture, meadow, upland, and to some degree the woods—the woods, always, to a child, that fearsome place. One June day this boy, a mile from home, far enough to be in very depths of strangeness, was going with tense drawn nerves at boy's pace through a chestnut forest. The place was flooded with sunshine, radiant with all greeneries, redolent of young summer, a paradise, but for the awesomeness. It would not, however, be an evil spirit that would come out upon one at such a time, but rather some fair lady, exceedingly rich and beautiful, who dwelt lonely in deep forest grotto and would be seeking some boy whom she might adopt and make him rich and famous. With such fancies prancing through his brain, of a sudden, from on high, bell-notes, so clear, mellow, sweet, and round as mortal ear had never heard! It was the lad's first introduction to the hermit thrush; but you could not persuade his quickened nerves it was a bird! No bird could make a fellow's heart go that way. And he had looked for it long and well; the sounds would continue until he came within a stone's throw of the place, then cease and anon fall from some other quarter. It was quickly established in his mind that this was none other than a visitant from heaven. And thence-forward the woods to him were full of them. He could not detail this encounter back at home, he would only get laughed

> at for his fright. And so the illusion remained with all its brilliant impressiveness unremoved. And my friend assures me this simple incident in the woods proved to be a turning point in his life; that bird song was the key which began to unlock certain new faculties within him; the nature faculties, he calls them now.[12]

Nature is the Enchanted Isle in which we find *ourselves* as, in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* the shipwrecked found themselves, "when no man was his own." However far we may advance in the understanding and use of the universe we can never know it intimately until we know it as a parable.

VIII

Deeply impressive and illuminating is the swift and subtle way in which, sometimes, the natural scene enters into a spiritual experience, as if to seal it with the signet of eternal beauty and truth. I take the figure from Tagore's line: "Thou didst press the signet of eternity upon many a fleeting moment of my life." [13] Whoever has felt the pressure of this signet in some transcendent hour cannot escape the deep sense of the conspiring harmony of Nature and Spirit. Spiritual correspondences, far deeper than Swedenborg divined, unite the natural and the spiritual, like the deftly woven patterns of a Persian rug or the runic figures upon a Celtic cross. Sunrise and sunset and all the varied forms of beauty in earth and sky that accompany "the covenant of the day and the covenant of the night" set signet imprints

[12] *John Knox McLean, A Biography,* pp. 13, 14. Smith Brothers, Oakland, Cal., 1914.
[13] *Gitanjali,* p. 43.

of spiritual meaning upon our fleeting moments. Well did Plato describe the universe as the moving image of eternity.

Too seldom are we aware of these sacramental meanings and events. "On the day when the lotus bloomed, alas, my mind was straying, and I knew it not." [14] Many are the unrecognized sacraments upon the altar of Beauty, the unaccepted ministries of Nature—mornings whose freshness fails to bedew self-centered souls, sunsets that flame and fade leaving dull hearts untouched, mountains whose strength makes no appeal to flagging spirits, wayside flowers that lift their joyous faces to the passer-by unnoticed, bird songs that stir no answering music in the heart, the sweep of seas that arouse no sense of the infinite, the hush of forests that distill no quietness, the sapphire of skies that awaken no answering depths. The time will come, it may be, when the human spirit will awaken to its heritage and enter more fully into the spiritual wealth of inspiration and joy in Nature—this marvelous treasure-house and instrument for the cultivation and expression of personality amid whose beauty and splendor our unresponsive lives are passed.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

X

The Inseparable Fellowship

THE ESSENTIAL nature of personality and of personal relations, human and divine, is such as to warrant the hope, on the part of persons, to expect to pass beyond the narrow bounds of this life. To restrict the assumed sphere of personal activity to the present limited sphere of existence would be like attempting to confine that "blithe spirit" and "unbodied joy," the skylark, whose home is the air, to the bars and bounds of a cage. To regard the soul as merely mortal is to misconceive and undervalue it.[1]

I

Immortality inherent in the nature of personality (or, as it used to be phrased, the indestructibility of the soul); involved in our relation to "the God not of the dead but of the living"; and wrought into the inviolable bond of loyal affection:—here is a threefold impletion of immortality suf-

[1] "The idea of the immortality of the soul is the measure of the soul's intrinsic dignity." *Rethinking Missions*, p. 56. Harper & Bros., 1932.

ficient to beget and sustain a vital and rational hope. Immortality is more than an inference; it is an emerging experience, a state already potentially entered upon. The reason for believing that we shall be immortal is because, so far as we are truly persons, we are already virtually immortal. The burden of proof lies upon the negative, not upon the affirmative, upon those who seek to show that, existing as we now do as supranatural selves, we shall cease to exist as such. What happens to the body is far from conclusive testimony in the case.

The Christian assurance of immortality rests implicitly upon personality-constituted rational foundations. The resurrection of Christ means so much to Christianity not because it creates a truth but because it illuminates and confirms a truth. It is the character of the Christ who could not be held by death, rather than the character of the evidence, that is convincing. The resurrection was a spiritual event rather than a physical phenomenon. It meant the victory of an unconquerable spirit over death, rather than the rising of a body from the grave. The real basis of Paul's faith, as expressed in his great resurrection chapter,[2] is the inherent vitality of personality. Christ rose, he affirms, through the working of a deep-lying, far-reaching law; for "as there is a natural life there is also a spiritual life," which death cannot destroy.

In these searching, scientific days, dissatisfied as we are with the validity of purely spiritual convictions, there has sprung up a new and daring attempt to discover the facts

[2] I Corinthians 15.

concerning the other life by means of science. Certain phenomena which have long baffled complete explanation, indicating a possible personal existence beyond the present, have been seized upon and rigorously and patiently examined by a group of scientists, psychologists, and philosophers, with reference to their possible proof of communication with the discarnate.

The quest is fascinating and, while we are waiting to get some word from Mars, has aroused a natural and in some respects beneficial interest. It is well if, by any means, the attention of our this-worldly age can be turned to the thought of a life beyond. It is especially novel and exhilarating to have scientists turning their attention to this quarter. It will enhearten some good people who think that no one but a scientist really knows anything, and that if he will only declare the case for immortality settled, settled it will be. And yet, in view of evidence based upon rational grounds, one cannot help wondering if this incursion of science into the realm of the spirit is not somewhat like the case of a man who, when the front door of his home stands wide open, should go around to the rear door and pound and call and finally try to force the lock. There is no probability that the attempt will succeed, although science is skilful and strong. But suppose it should, the question is, if we would learn any more about the real furnishings of the house not made with hands, or the real life of its occupants, by trying to peer within, with scrutinizing, unchastened eyes. "Spiritual truths are spiritually discerned." Personal survival can best be realized by personal means.

The chief thing that strikes one as open to criticism in Spiritism is the unintentional assumption that the grounds of our confidence in immortality are not in themselves adequate. The fault is not in the evidence, but in ourselves, that we are underlings of mortality. Our certitudes are sufficient; it is ourselves who are uncertain. If we believe not the testimony of our own spirits, moved upon by the Spirit of God, reinforced by the risen Christ, and ratified by reason, would we believe though a communication, direct and explicit, came from that other world?

II

It may be judged inconsistent, although I think unjustly, if we turn with better confidence from this sort of evidence for immortality to another that appears to be very similar and yet is really of quite another sort. It may be introduced by means of a suggestive incident.

A very unusual communication once came to a pastor in a Massachusetts town, to be read at the prayer meeting of his church. It was sent by a member of the church, one of the most brilliant journalists this country has ever had, and the reading of it produced what comes as near being a sensation as a prayer meeting often witnesses. It was entitled "The Shadow of Death," and related how the writer, subsequent to a sudden illness, wavered between life and death for several days, during which, to quote her words:

> To myself it seemed, and it still seems, as if my spirit were partially detached from the body—not absolutely freed from it, but floating about, receiving impressions with great readiness, but not with entire accuracy.

After describing the experience with some detail, and not without a delightful bit of humor here and there, the writer concluded:

> Beloved—you, if any such there be who through fear of death have been all your life-time subject to bondage —be of good cheer. For seven weeks I lay encamped on the farther side if not the farthest side of the valley of the shadow of death, and it is a pleasant valley. Its tranquility was as gentle, as natural, as deep as sleep. Its activities were as simple as going into the next room. Its atmosphere was peace. Its only gloom was my keenest pity for those who must remain behind. I hope and think that its shadows mark the fore-gleams of life. We are born into the valley of the shadow of death, and we die out of it into life eternal, which is to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.

It is not strange that this letter was borrowed to be read at other prayer meetings, and others, until its publication was called for and it was issued, supplemented by a considerable number of accounts of experiences of a similar kind, under the title *X-Rays*.[3] The author was Mary Abagail Dodge, who wrote under the *nom de plume* of Gail Hamilton. Among the narratives in the little book is that of the experience of President Cyrus Hamlin after undergoing an operation in the Massachusetts General Hospital. In relating his experience Dr. Hamlin stated:

> I became convinced that my beloved friends, all those most dear to me, were waiting for me. It was a delightful thought—I shall not go out into a great unpeopled infinity.

[3] The book is, I think, out of print.

> My best beloved friends are all here—many of them are in the room, and before another morning light dawns I shall be with them. I perceived that death is nothing terrible, it is even pleasant in its immediate anticipation.

He recovered and lived many years more, but never lost the sense of the reality and value of this experience.

III

The question at once arises: Are not these the old-fashioned "death-bed scenes" that long ago lost credence and currency? Yes, they are. But is it not possible that these borderland phenomena may hereafter afford the religious psychologist material of far more significance than the comparatively trivial mediumistic messages of which so much is now being made?

> In all these cases alike (as Gail Hamilton wrote) word comes, not indeed from beyond the gates—is therefore not final—but it comes in all cases from those who have pressed as near the gates as any could go and turn back, and in one case it comes from one who passed on. It is, therefore, approximately, testimony.

Granted a considerable degree of morbid other-worldliness in many of these instances, not a few are so genuine and vivid that could a large number of them be brought together and given the thorough attention and study which they deserve they might greatly strengthen in many minds an all too wavering conviction of the reality of the life beyond this. Psychologists, as a rule, would doubtless explain them away

by attributing them to abnormal excitation of the nerves, producing hallucinations, to be known as such by reference to ordinary experience and by the absence of reliable testimony as to any life except the present. But who has determined that ordinary experience is superior to extraordinary? Or why should sense verification be the infallible criterion of reality?

It is not unreasonable to judge of what the spirit may be able to experience detached from the body in the light of what occurs while the detachment is in process. If, then, in many cases indications of joyous personal recognition on the borderland are so strong, may we not infer that personal associations continue after the body dies? Is there nothing more enduring in our personal relationships than what was expressed in an old New England divine's account of marriage as "a comfortable intimacy with a fellow worm?"

IV

Yet it would be but a limited and evanescent vision if personal consciousness of those in the larger life were confined to the fleeting moments when the soul prepares for flight. Is there not some kind of spiritual intercourse with the unseen of a simpler and more normal sort? That there is *communication* of the kind indicated by mediumship and kindred phenomena is unsubstantiated.[4] Telepathy among

[4] It would be a most unfortunate thing if knowledge of future events could be obtained by communications from the Other World. The whole normal order of events and relations would be profoundly disturbed thereby. No right-minded person would desire, or consent to profit by, such information if it were to be had—which happily it is not.

the living appears to be the best explanation of such phenomena as are more than coincidences. But setting aside this surreptitious kind of intercourse the far larger and worthier possibility is that of a continued *personal communion* with those whom we love, on the level of the best, most uplifting personal intercourse we now know. Such communion, continuing and enriching the ties which bind us together as persons now, would seem to be reasonable and, in the best sense of the word, natural.

Let us briefly examine the simple and admitted facts with respect to our relationships to those in the "Other Room" to see if they do not involve more of reality than we have been accustomed to attach to them.

In the first place, it is perfectly patent that our fellow beings do not pass away from us and leave a complete blank, an unconsciousness of their ever having existed, such as appears to be the case with the lower animals. An animal falls in the herd and the rest trample him under foot. A fish dies in the aquarium and the others are entirely indifferent. A man dies, and some of his fellows, at least, still speak of him, think of him, love him. Your discarnate comrade, if the tie is really strong and vital, has certainly not passed out of your mental and spiritual world. That may not at first seem very much; but consider what it involves, or may involve. He continues to influence your life, and that often very strongly, far more so, it may be, than your neighbor in the next house, especially if the latter is *persona non grata*.

Can there be any doubt which of these two, one

beyond the stars and the other so intrusively obvious and spatially near, is the more real and significant to you personally? True, you would give worlds to have that obtrusive neighbor suddenly change into your friend beyond the stars. But the very fact that you long to see the latter become real in the flesh shows that he is vitally real to you in the spirit.

When we get a truer conception of the nature and potentialities of personality we shall cease to be so bound by the inhibitions and limitations of the sense of *place* as we are now. It would be foolish to deny the value of spatial proximity to personal intercourse. To be in the same place with another person is to prepare the way, at least, for personal communion that transcends place. And yet, how far we rise above spatial limits in our personal contacts, annihilating space with the fairy wand of post or electricity! What does space matter when two congenial spirits can find each other through personal message or printed page? [5] The elect spirits of the Past are of the Present also. Jesus, Socrates, Confucius, Paul, lived across seas of time and space from us. Yet do we not know each of them personally better than we know many a man whom we pass in the street daily? The reason why a great book is so dear a comrade is that it is, as it were, the resurrection body of a deathless personality. "Spirit is where it energizes," as the author of *The Christian Reconstruction of Modern Life* has said. If we can only find some method of getting in touch with another person, we can defy time and space. This much, then, seems clear: Those in the Land of the Unforgotten are real to us. Are we

[5] This is a renewal of the discussion begun in Chapter II.

real to them? Communicate we cannot. But can we commune?

V

Is there any actual conscious communion between the discarnate and ourselves? By conscious communion is meant the mutual interchange of love and sympathy, without, necessarily, the exchange of formulated ideas. Can such intercourse take place between two living friends who are so separated that no exchange of letters or other messages is possible? Many would say at once: No, between persons cut off from each other in this world, or any other, in such a way that no exchange of messages is possible, there is and can be no contact whatever. No communication; no communion. But is it so?

Imagine two close friends, each of whom has good reason to suppose that the other is living yet between whom no possible word or sign can be conveyed. Let each concentrate his thought upon the other—as they would be sure to do—would nothing take place between them? Would they be aware only of the separation? *Cor ad cor loquitur.* We sit by the same fireside in order that heart-language may transpire. How far apart may we be and still commune?—the width of a hearth? a room? a street? a continent? a world? How many words are necessary to communion?—a thousand, ten, one—none? One sees upon reflection that communion, as distinguished from communication, is by far the truer and deeper reality. It may be that there is, as G. W. Balfour has suggested, a larger telepathy—though

that term may not be the best for it—which links all like-minded persons in whatever worlds in a mutual sharing of the truth which lies back of ideas and out of which truths emerge, our minds influencing one another far more than we recognize.

VI

Our habitual dependence upon some form of communication is indeed so great that the loss of it easily becomes disheartening. Unless we can find some method of communication with one we love we are restless and lonesome. And yet, need our dependence upon it be quite so absolute? Difficult as it is, may we not transcend communication? *Do* we not transcend it? Are we not conscious at times of the presence of the friend we had supposed "lost"—not so intimately as Tennyson, when the soul of Hallam was "flashed on his, and whirl'd about empyreal heights," yet so truly that we become deeply, joyously, aware of him? May he not also be conscious of us? May he not even have taken the initiative? It is a daring assumption, but not an impossible one. I cannot myself claim any vivid experience of communion with the discarnate, and yet I would not say that I had had nothing of the kind. At any rate, I have friends, balanced, educated, thoughtful, who have had experiences of this kind of such realistic vividness as to amount to complete assurance.

In some cases, the experience of presence and interchange is so real that distinct verbal communication is believed to be received. This, however, may be explained as a *sub-*

jective formulation in words of an experience transcending language. It would not be strange if such an experience produced the effect of spoken words. Gail Hamilton tells of a friend calling to commiserate her grandmother, after the death of her grandfather, to whose solicitude the lady replied: "Oh, I am not lonesome at all. I am conversing a great deal with my departed friends." Was this wholly a delusion? "All pure imagination and foolishness!" exclaims the devotee of common sense. Well, but what of *his* notion that the things about him are real in just the way he thinks they are? Is that valid? Will it bear examination? It will not answer to dogmatize from the limited viewpoint of common sense. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the Horatian philosophy.

VII

A significant characteristic of the kind of communion with the unseen we have been describing is its naturalness. It partakes of that fearless, reassuring, home feeling that brings with it so great a sense of reality. "I feel just as I used to when he was sitting beside me with his work," said a friend of mine, of one whom conventionality is accustomed to call a "departed" husband. Departed, dead, gone, lost—when shall we cease using these dismal and heathenish phrases for those who, according to the Christian faith, have entered into life and are with us in spirit, though not in body?

The time may come when we will nurture our ties with those in the "Other Room" instead of trying to forget them;

when, instead of seeking diversion by forgetting them, we shall seek diversion from sorrow and care *with* them; when the birthdays of the spirit members of the family will be kept as gratefully and, in one sense, as happily, as those of the living. We need a return from modern paganism to true Christianity, a return from "the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness," to that which is not of this world, the deeper wisdom of Wordsworth's little maid who still made answer, "We are seven."

VIII

In the Ducal Palace at Venice is a most impressive *Paradiso,* by Tintoretto. It covers with its rich, dark, Venetian coloring an entire wall of the great council hall. It is perhaps the most daring attempt ever made to depict the vast concourse of the redeemed. The effect at first is confusing, then, as one catches its full meaning, deeply impressive. Tier upon tier, range upon range, they unfold, not in the serried ranks of an ordered and disciplined army, but in the free and natural unity of personal intercourse, like the petals of Dante's Golden Rose. Faces, clouds of faces, each beautiful, each different, all are turned toward Jesus and Mary who are haloed in the light of the Divine Glory that glows brightest above and about them, symbolizing the Personal Radiance of God, who illumines the entire spiritual fellowship. In the lower part of the picture is a new-born soul emerging into this high companionship, his countenance filled with reverent and wondering joy.

The artist's conception is plainly confined to another life.

Yet such a fellowship of redeemed persons, bathed in the Light Divine, is not so much a matter of time or place as of moral concord and spiritual unity. It begins here. Why should it stop here? In the progressive approach toward such an inclusive and joyous spiritual fellowship, expressed and fulfilled in far wider ways than any picture can paint, lies the goal, so far as we can see, of human life, perhaps of the very universe itself.

> "This fair assemblage; stoles of snowy white
> How numberless! The city, where we dwell,
> Behold how vast; and these our seats how throng'd!" [6]

[6] Dante, *Paradiso,* III, 88-91.

XI

Conclusion

I

UNLESS GOD, freedom, and immortality are real the Personal Order seems hardly more than a mirage; [1] but with these as reliances the universe loses its incoherence and life becomes trustworthy, meaningful, and hopeful.

Such an *argumentun ad hominem* does not demonstrate these holdings to be true, although it gives them the full weight of value-confirmation. They do not rest, however, solely upon their pragmatic value, or upon probability, or upon logical demonstration. They are not simply the deposits of wish-thinking, or postulates of the moral reason. They might rather be called implicates, corporate elements of personal experience.[2] Given the self and other selves, and the Supreme Self—freedom and immortality follow.

[1] I do not mean by this that personality is not in itself a genuine reality and value, but that it lacks attestation and fulfilment unless God, freedom, and immortality are assured.

[2] An implicate, as distinguished from a postulate, may be defined as a knowledge that inheres in other knowledge. Thus God, freedom, and immortality are all involved in self-knowledge. They are awarenesses, implicitly and inseparably attached to selfhood, and becoming explicit by the exercise of attention, or recognition, vitalized by the exercise of faith.

Persons are not objective in the same unresponsive way as are objects. Nor are they merely subjective. They are subject-objects and reciprocally self-revealing. We are conscious of ourselves, of others, and of God; but not in the same obtrusive way that we are aware of our physical sensations, of the objects about us, and of the bodies of other selves. We are aware, "in the same way that we know when we are awake that we are awake," [3] of ourselves, of others with whom we are in converse, and (although ordinarily less clearly) of the all-enveloping Person in whose Presence we live and move and have our being.

At times of clearer vision we become intensely conscious of all of these members of the personal world, not as detached from the physical world but transcending it. Thus, upon reflection, we come to realize that the Personal Order constitutes our most real and meaningful habitat though not our most obvious and insistent one. The world we live in is a physical world, the world we live into is a personal world.

II

To gain the truly personal level of thought and life is not a simple matter. On the contrary the very idea itself of such a world is confronted by great difficulties. To actually realize what it means to be a person, a member of the Personal Realm, calls for an expansion of one's mental and moral horizon comparable by analogy to that of one

[3] A phrase of Emerson.

of the lepidoptera when it emerges from its pupal and chrysalis stage into a new and unconfined spatial realm and takes wing!

Such an enlarged view of this Personal Realm is hardly more demanding, however, than that required of us by Science when we are asked to accept a physical order in which all the familiar features of our every-day world are strangely altered, the stars becoming suns of colossal dimensions and overwhelming gyrations, the atmosphere the birthplace and graveyard of cosmic rays, the solid objects about us resolved into swarms of revolving electrons, and our own bodies into communities of cooperant cells and organisms. To accept a universe of this kind, so different from our every-day, familiar, matter-of-fact world, calls for a very considerable degree of imaginative scientific faith. As compared with that demand surely it is not unreasonable to seek to grasp the intimate yet far-reaching realities of the Personal Realm; for this is a faith firmly rooted in experience as well as in rational principles; since we are undeniably members of such a realm and are constantly required to adjust our lives to its demands. It is no reflection upon Personalism that it has real difficulties to encounter and persistent problems to meet. We will turn in closing to a brief reconsideration of some of these difficulties and to an expansion of some of the principles already presented.

III

One of the requirements of Personalism easiest to assent to, yet hardest to realize and live up to, and into, is that

belief in the worth of every human self which is essential to faith in personal values.

The worth of the best persons is readily recognized. They stand forth in the "pages of history" and in contemporary life "secure in their high-hearted ways," distinct, admirable, inviolable. But the vast majority, the riffraff, the morons, the despicable, the offscouring of the race—can they be regarded as of any real worth? Some men are too mean to be loved by anyone except by a dog—and God. How can we accord to them any personal value whatever!

The only way to find worth in the apparently worthless is to lay all the stress it will bear (and it will bear much) upon the unrealized potential in each self—that spark of possible goodness, that "root of righteousness," which is in every human being. It is in detecting this potential worth, as has been pointed out, that Christianity has done such an incomparable and transforming task.[4] To Jesus and those who have caught His vision, no one is worthless—in the light of that which he may become. Zacchæus, Mary Magdalene, the demoniac of Gadara, the thief on the cross —representing the mean man, the depraved woman, the mentally diseased, and the criminal—these are the prototypes of the transformed selves whom Christianity has proved to be redeemable. If such are potentially worthful, who is not? The apparent worthlessness of "human trash" can be met in three ways: (1) by a just appreciation of qualities that seem drab and commonplace, but take on a different color to a truly discerning eye; (2) by a deeper in-

[4] *Supra*, Chapter III.

sight into the hidden possibilities of personality, and (3) (as Kant so clearly saw) by belief in the extension of opportunity for recovery and development beyond the confines of the present life.

IV

Another of the chief difficulties of Personalism is that of isolating human personality sufficiently from the psychophysical organism in which it is enmeshed (like a life-germ in its nutritive encasement), in order to view it in some sort by itself and then to conceive the possibility of its being released from its conditioning environment altogether and set forward on a new and freer spiritual life-level of its own. To mere common sense this seems a foolish and fanciful undertaking. Yet, difficult and daring as it is, the isolation of a self is no more fanciful than the isolation of an electron, and certainly it is much more vital and full of meaning.

The reasonableness of isolation has been in a way anticipated in the universally recognized distinction between soul and body. How distinct these two are, yet how intimately interwoven, is strikingly expressed by Shakespeare's Brutus when he cries, "Oh, that we three could come by Cæsar's spirit and not dismember Cæsar!" So bald and mechanical, however, has been the ordinary dualism of "body and soul" that it is not strange that there has been a reaction in the direction of a theory of their identity. Consequently body, or the psychophysical, has tended in recent psychology to absorb the self, or soul. Yet this full-fledged Naturalism is

too far contradictory both to experience and to reason to satisfy even so empirical and scientific an age as ours. Such over-simplification of the mind-body problem at the cost of ignoring some of the factors involved is proving psychologically as well as philosophically bankrupt. The attempts that Personalism is making to effect a working isolation of the self without ignoring the body are therefore not only justified but demanded, in the interests not only of knowledge but of true and worthy living.

V

Most difficult of all the problems of the Personal Order are those concerning the Supreme Person and His relations to finite persons and to the cosmos. It is one thing to possess knowledge of God as a Personal Presence and quite another thing to attain any adequate knowledge about Him. A child (to recur to an illustration often used) may know his father as such in the home intimately, yet be almost wholly ignorant of him and quite incapable of understanding him as he is in the world outside of home. Such is the contrast between God the Father, of The Lord's Prayer, and the eternal and transcendent One of contemplative thought.

In offering a further word upon this difficult subject it may not be irrelevant to reverse the problem as it is usually presented—*viz.*, How can there be a Personal God in any way responsible for such a world as this?—and substitute the alternative question: How can there not be? In other words:

If there is no Person greater and higher than man, how account for him as person? How can human personality, conscious of itself and its own higher nature, have come out of the Impersonal? This is the insuperable problem which Naturalism is compelled to face and before which it finds itself either dumb or incoherent or inconclusive.[5]

Without a higher personality, as its source, human personality is as enigmatic as would be a fatherless child discovered in a jungle. Just as the burden of proof in respect to immortality rests on him who denies the possible continuance of a person already potentially immortal, so does the burden of proof rest upon him who, setting aside experience, rational inference, and age-long human belief, attempts to show how personality can come from the impersonal, how that which is "from above" can come from that which is "below."

VI

Yet how can the Supreme Person be conceived as in close relation to the world, including man, and yet not be identified with it? Personalism, as we have seen, clearly and consistently differentiates its conception of the Supreme Person from every form of Pantheism. But this need not mean a Monotheism that interprets Unity as mere power or separational Deism.

It is extremely significant that the human mind gravi-

[5] This it is which calls a halt upon the otherwise engaging philosophy of religion of John Dewey as presented in his "A Common Faith," whose principles I have submitted to examination in an article entitled "God and the Ideal." *The Journal of Religion*, January, 1935.

tates so constantly and persistently toward the concept of Unity in its quest of a principle for organizing and interpreting the world of multiplicity. This may mean more for Personal Theism than is ordinarily recognized.

In India the ardent quest for Unity evolved a Monism that constantly vibrates between Pantheism and Theism.[6] In Egypt the quest broke through darkness into light in the strikingly theistic "Hymn to the Sun" of Akhnaton. In China it came to rest in an all-comprehending Ethical Monotheism. In Greece, Unity took the form of a Cosmological Creative Principle in Ionian philosophy, advanced to Pure Unitary Being in Xenophanes and Parmenides, and at its peak rose to the height of Plato's conception of "the Good" and Aristotle's "Unmoved Mover."

The theological systems of Medievalism, as well as its deeper mystical speculations, manifest the same arduous pursuit of Unity. Modern Philosophy, from Spinoza and Malebranche to Hegel and Royce exhibits a like unwearied devotion to the principle of Unity with repeated endeavors to relate it synthetically to Multiplicity.

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[6] It is significant to note the approach toward Personalism of the Sankhya philosophy, as interpreted by Professor Radhakrishnan. "The Sankhya System," he writes, "speaks of three forms of personality: The Superhuman Personality, which is possessed by God, or Isvara; the human personality, which is possessed by jivas called men; and the subhuman personality which belongs to all other beings and things." (*The Sankhya Conception of Personality,* by A. K. Majumdar, M.A., Calcutta University Press, 1930) Professor Kenneth Saunders holds that this personalistic conception is due to the Yoga and after stating that "personality is, in fact, a delusion to the philosophic Hindu" goes on to say: "The Yoga, however, introduced into the Sankhya System Isvara, the Lord, and taught that Moksha is union with Him; and this doctrine made possible an alliance between Sankhya rationalism and Bhagavata faith." *The Gospel for Asia,* p. 122. The Macmillan Company.

It is a mistake to suppose that all this outreach of the human mind toward Unity has been mere empty speculation, satisfying the intellect but leaving the heart and will unaffected. On the contrary every finest florescence and fruition of the impulse toward Unity carries within it personal theistic implications and religious values. Personal attitudes and values are in fact to be found in every great monistic philosophy.[7] Illustrations of this abound. Not philosophy alone but religion also feels to this day the uplifting personal piety of Plotinus and follows with reverence his "flight of the alone to the Alone." The deep religious feeling of Spinoza for the Infinite has made this pure spirit for nearly three hundred years the master of many aspiring minds who through his profound philosophic piety have found One sufficiently trustworthy, as well as unitary, to set the soul at rest. Emerson's "Over Soul" moves the heart as well as the intellect, as no mere abstract notion could possibly do. One of the chief reasons why the philosophy of Josiah Royce gives evidence of an increasing influence upon the religion, as well as the philosophy, of the future is his loyalty to an Absolute Self sufficiently personal to bestow saving grace.[8]

Even the pragmatists cannot rid themselves of the encompassing sense of Unity and the religious feeling which accompanies it. Both William James and John Dewey at

[7] It is not enough to regard this personalistic impulse in Monism as fulfilled in a Whole which includes persons as the highest part of its content. For this leaves the Whole imperfect, a totality rather than a complete Whole and thus lacking in the Unity which only perfect Personality can have.

[8] *The Problem of Christianity*, Vol. II.

times yield unexpected homage to Unity—their pluralism and pragmatism fading for the time being into the background. "We inhabit an invisible spiritual environment from which help comes," declares James, "our soul being mysteriously one with a larger soul whose instruments we are." [9] James tried hard to dethrone Absolutism, but he compromised his cause in that favorite and characteristic saying of his: Ever not quite. Not quite what? Not quite —Perfection. Not what works, but what satisfies the ideal, is the fundamental reality. In his more thoughtful mood the pragmatic Dewey too, returns to his Hegelian reverence for the Whole, reassuring himself and his struggling comrades with the thought that "even in the midst of conflict, struggle, and defeat a consciousness is possible of the enduring and comprehensive Whole."

It is unreasonable to suppose that the All-inclusive One, toward whom searching and devout minds have been so insatiably drawn throughout the history of thought, can be wholly divested of personal qualities and reduced to a purely Impersonal Entity, much less to a mere Abstraction. No responsive emotion or enduring interest is awakened by barren Wholeness. The very idea of meaningful Oneness is invested with something of personality. Nothing can be truly One but Mind. Nor can Mind be truly Mind unless it is moral, hence good, hence personal.[10] Vital Monism thus reveals itself as, potentially at least, personalistic.

[9] *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 108. Longmans, Green & Company, 1902.

[10] An evil mind has, to be sure, intellectual force and initiative, but it is destructive rather than constructive and thus defective and abortive.

Yet Unity comes to qualitative completeness only as it clearly and consciously gains those eternally active, outgoing, revealing qualities which constitute Perfect Personality. Nothing less than Personal Theism is adequate to interpret and implement the idea of Unity so deeply entrenched in the human mind. Thus arises that larger conception of Unity, which, rightly understood, issues in the Christian conception of Tri-unity.[11]

VII

Christian Theology has formulated its conception of a personal God in his original and continuous relation to the world and to men in three familiar doctrines—Divine Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Omniscience. These three somewhat arbitrary and abstract doctrines have been held in an undefined and rather dogmatic manner, but with the conviction that they represent vital truths in the conception of God and his relation to Nature and to humanity. In the light of Personalism these doctrines take on a far more reasonable and illuminating signification.

We have already seen how Omnipresence presents a new and larger meaning when interpreted as a consequence of perfect personality. A perfect Person could not be other than present to every person. Let us ask if Omniscience does not also assume a more intelligible aspect from the viewpoint of Personalism.

[11] The doctrine of the Trinity, philosophically interpreted, is indubitably the best analytical attempt to express the comprehensible Unity of Perfect Personality. *Cf.* D. Mial Edwards, *Christianity and Philosophy,* Chapter X.

Professor Royce has thrown out an illuminating suggestion in this direction in his theory of the Time-Span of an Infinite Mind able, as such, to embrace all events in an eternal present.[12] A Mind that is completely time-spanning may, equally well, be completely person-spanning. To us, in our day, to be sure, as to the Psalmist in his, such a thought is too high, we cannot attain unto it. Yet our own minds are, to a degree, not only time-spanning but person-spanning. Let one start with his own mind and its power to understand other minds and he can gain thereby a possible clue to the Divine Mind.

It is a daring inference to draw, for it is an infinite distance from our minds, with their restricted knowledge of others, to a Mind that knows all completely. But when you compare the knowledge-content of the mind of a child with that of an Aristotle, or a Goethe, or an Emerson, it becomes paltry to attempt to limit the extent of the capacity of Mind as Mind.

One has only to try to expel the consciousness that he is known by Some One besides himself and his fellows to realize how implicit and deep-seated this conviction is—in many minds at least. It would be as difficult to think of the sky as gone as of this personal *überhaupt,* this all-inclusive Omniscient Mind, as non-existent. "There is Heaven," said Confucius, "it knows me." Let one try to imagine himself entirely alone in the cosmos, the last of mankind—no one besides himself in existence. Would he succeed? Could he think of himself as absolutely the only

[12] *Cf., The World and the Individual,* Vol. I, Lecture IV; Vol. II, Lecture III.

existent mind? As the idea of existence (or being) is inextricably present in every affirmation, so the consciousness of God is present in the consciousness of oneself, as a self.[13]

It is easy to say—as is being done so frequently today—that the idea of God is a survival of primitive childish notions and has been dispelled by modern science and psychology. But why did the idea of God ever enter human consciousness? And why has it continued? To say that we infer from the relation of a child to a father a Universal Father of all men is very plausible—but how extraordinary that the mind has the power to make fatherhood a concept at all and then to make it universal! No animal has ever thought thus of its parent. Why? Is it merely because the animal has not arrived at the stage where he can make such an inference? But why should the human mind ever arrive at the idea of a Universal Father if there is nothing to warrant it? It is quite as reasonable to suppose with Paul that every "fatherhood in heaven and earth is named" (that is constituted) by its relationship to the one all-constitutive Paternity from which human fatherhood draws its meaning and validity.[14]

The wisest way to regard these deep-seated and persistent religious ideas is not to evacuate them as wholly without basis or meaning but to seek for an irreducible minimum, an underlying substratum upon which they are built up, a

[13] It is significant that a confessed criminal, threatened by a lynching mob in California, declared to the Sheriff in tones of utter sincerity, "Before God I affirm, etc." Why did he say, in that crucial moment, "Before God?"

[14] Eph. 3:15.

nucleus of truth which is itself reliable, but to which has been given, too often, a crude, exaggerated form.

VIII

It is not impossible that our distributive and collective self-knowledge may be taken up into a Unifying Transcendence in such a way as not to destroy the distinction between the human self and the Divine Self—while at the same time it does away with the separative isolation of a mere multiplicity of selves.[15]

Our knowledge of ourselves, and the changing content of consciousness, may be at the same time self-knowledge and God's knowledge of us. Selfhood is not thereby necessarily lost. It may remain free and our own while at the same time it is interlinked with that of all our fellowmen in the mind of the Super-self, the Transcendent Knower, who holds us all together in "the hollow of His Hand," or, in other words, in the inclusiveness of His all pervading immanent-transcendent Consciousness.

Each single plant in my garden is dependent for its life upon the sun, the common source of all life, yet each plant lives its own life, keeps its own identity, produces its own blossoms and its own fruit. If it were conscious of the sun, as the soul is conscious of God, the plant would say to itself:

[15] In other words, it is not inconceivable that Royce's inclusion of finite selves within an all-embracing Absolute Self and Howison's insistence upon an autonomy of the individual self may after all be reconcilable.

"I draw my life from the sun, I am dependent upon it momentarily for my existence, and yet I live my own life; how this can be I cannot tell, and yet I know it to be true." This is the paradox of the One and the Many, freedom and determinism—a paradox insoluble in logical terms unless the logic be comprehensive enough to include the meaning of paradox itself.[16]

The relationship of the One and the Many as it is found in the physical and social realms is of several different types. In the human body, *e.g.*, the many cells and the several organs have each a kind of selfhood of its own yet all are unified and directed by a single "entelechy," the animate soul which unifies and directs the whole body. In this case there is no self-consciousness on the part of the cooperating units—at least so far as we can discern—yet all lend themselves, with a kind of willing cooperation to the life of the body as a unitary whole. In social organisms, such as a group, a church, a nation, several different types of the many-one relationship obtain, in each of which there is self-consciousness on the part of the individual formative units, yet no central self-consciousness. And yet in each case the group itself has a distinctive personal quality though it is not a person.

Coming to a higher level there is no denying the possibility—based upon experience—of a One-many Unity in which the One is completely Self-conscious and at the same time also conscious of each of the units while they are also themselves conscious each of itself—this very con-

[16] *Cf.* an article by the present writer, "What and Why Is Paradox?" *The Open Court*, January, 1931.

sciousness being present in the All-embracing Divine Consciousness.[17]

IX

Turning now to a possible reinterpretation of the doctrine of Omnipotence in the light of personality, we may ask if it may not be possible to interpret Omnipotence as that empowerment of things "to make themselves" which is called "Evolution" and that enabling of selves to make themselves which we call self-development. We found it to be the nature of human personality to be dependent, receptive, developmental, and the nature of Divine Personality to be complete, self-sustained, self-giving and have inferred that it is by reason of this perfection that God may be regarded as the Self-imparting Person.[18] How this Self-impartation can take place it is difficult to conceive, but its rationality is evident. For it is of the nature of what Jonathan Edwards called "excellence," to impart itself. Instead of being static, perfection is the purest self-giving activity.[19] To be perfect

[17] If this were taken to mean that the consciously free acts of finite selves are not their own but are the acts of the All-embracing Self, it would contradict the experience of autonomy and responsibility possessed by each of us and would make God the sole Author of all that happens in human life, good and bad, worthy and despicable. This would reduce Evil to a mere semblance, pulverize human personality, and leave only moral chaos. Rather than accept such an Absolutism it would be truer to human experience and the integrity of that Moral Order which is the structural principle of human society to deny the very existence of the One, to give up Unity for plurality and substitute Humanism for Theism. But this is by no means the alternative. Difficult as it is to grasp, and still more difficult to formulate, there may be, as attested by religious experience, a conscious relationship of each self to an All-knowing and All-righteous One which guarantees rather than restricts freedom and calls out rather than limits self-development.

[18] *Supra*, p. 89.

[19] *Supra*, p. 90.

is not to be withdrawn and self-contained. The measure of self-completion is the measure of self-impartation.

Of all forms of giving, as well as of being, self-impartation is the highest and most divine. Giving of things is merely the transfer of externals, unless the gift is made the means of giving oneself. Teaching is only the passing on of instruction unless the teacher imparts himself with his knowledge.

Creation is inherently inferior to impartation; for while it invests the created product with something of the nature of the Creator, creation does not, and cannot, directly convey the creator to another free, consciously-receptive self. That can be done by impartation only.

Judging, then, by analogy with human relationships, Divine Impartation would seem to be the method, so far as we can conceive it, by which humanity as a whole, and each individual, mediately (through other persons) receives from the Perfect Person the supreme worth and grace of personality. "As to the spirits," as Edwards wrote, "they are the communications of the Great Original Spirit." The discerning insight of Leibniz also reached this conclusion. "While souls in general," he wrote, "are living mirrors or images of the universe of creatures, rational minds are images of the creator Himself, the divine author of nature. . . . Every rational mind is as it were a little divinity in its own department. This is what makes rational minds capable of entering into a kind of society with God, so that to them God is not as an inventor to his machine (this being his relation to his other creatures) but as a Prince to his subjects and even as a Father to his children." [20]

[20] Monadology.

This conception of personality as having its Source and movement from above, in God, rather than from below, in Nature, is somewhat foreign to our Evolution-nurtured contemporary mind. Yet it comes far nearer than any naturalistic interpretation of the origin and development of personality can do to the general conviction of humanity as a whole, as to the whence of the soul and to the still upward pointings of experience. Perhaps no better modern expression of the well-nigh universal witness of consciousness can be made than that of Emerson when in the essay on *The Over Soul* he wrote: "Our being is descending into us from we know not whence. . . . Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul."

X

Impartation, as has already been indicated is necessarily conditioned upon receptivity. For nothing can be truly imparted unless there is a responsive appropriation on the part of the recipient.[21] Thus the very nature of impartation (perhaps one might add, in its own way, of creation also) prescribes the condition and the means, the difficulty and the opportunity, of its exercise. In the realm of intelligence mutual respect is the precondition of self-impartation. To force the supreme gift of oneself upon another self, upon

[21] If by virtue Plato (following Socrates) meant much the same that we mean by character, or personality, there is a striking suggestion of impartation in such words as those of Socrates to Meno: "From this reasoning then, Meno, it appears to us that such as are possessed of virtue, have it as a divine portion or allotment to them."

the part of God or man, would be to offend freedom, to violate the other's selfhood, and thus to frustrate the essential nature and purpose of the act. Profound respect for another's selfhood, in offering oneself, is the only communicable attitude of persons, whether human or divine, to one another. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." [22] Personality always honors another by awaiting response before conferring itself. Holman Hunt has beautifully represented this attitude in his well-known picture, "The Light of the World."

The need of free cooperative receptivity (rising at higher levels to active cooperation) in and for the process of creation offers a suggestion as to the origin of evil, as found in the prologue of the Fourth Gospel in the words: "And the light shineth in the darkness (the unlighted, hence the formless, negative, the primal Given) and the darkness received it not." Unresponsiveness, developing into self-will, opposition, active enmity—is not this the "natural history of evil"? [23]

It is doubtful, then, if we can come much closer to representing the realm of personality than in some such statement as this: Through the universal Self-imparting of the Perfect Person finite selves come to themselves and in striving to adjust themselves to the world of the Not-self, to

[22] Revelation 3:20.

[23] A further discussion of this interpretation of the origin of evil may be found in an article by the present writer entitled "God and the Given." *The Journal of Religion*, January, 1934.

other selves, and to God, achieve freely their own self-realization as persons and uniting with other persons build the republic of socialized personality, *i.e.*, the Kingdom of God.[24]

XI

It remains to point out, in conclusion, how closely Divine Self-impartation corresponds to the doctrine of Grace (*charis*), the distinctive Christian conception of God.

The consciousness of receiving an outflow of Self-imparting Divine Grace runs throughout the New Testament. It sings in the strains of the Gloria in Excelsis, the Magnificat, and the Benedictus. It overflows Gospels and Epistles. All the apostles share it. To Peter, God is "the God of all grace." "My grace is sufficient for Thee!" is the exultant experience of Paul. "He giveth grace to the humble," declares James. "Of His fullness have we all received, grace upon grace," exclaims the author of the Fourth Gospel. Nor does this consciousness cease with the Apostolic Age. Augustine was overwhelmed by the sense of the beneficence of Divine Grace. So were Luther, Wesley, Edwards, Bunyan, Cowper, and countless others. Mystics in all ages have felt likewise. The hymns of the Church redound with this consciousness. Dante describes it in such lines as these:

[24] "If we regard the whole evolutionary process as a manifestation of Divine Purpose, it is in us as persons that Divine Personality is revealed. . . . If we be persons and more than individual selves, it is, in religious regard, through the all-embracing Personality of God." C. Lloyd Morgan, *Life, Mind and Spirit*, p. 311. Henry Holt & Co., 1925.

"Chè l' ardor santo, ch' ogni cosa raggia,
nella più simigliante è più vivace." [25]

Even in the supposedly arctic realm of Philosophy one may find not a few indications of the same consciousness, in varied forms. "More than two thousand years ago," writes Professor Whitehead, "the wisest of men proclaimed that the divine persuasion is the foundation of the order of the world, but that it could only produce such a measure of harmony as amid brute forces it was possible to accomplish. This, I suggest, is a plain anticipation by Plato of a doctrine of grace, seven hundred years before the age of Pelagius and Augustine." [26] The later writings of that strongly personalistic thinker, Fichte, show him coming into the realization of Divine impartation in the derivation of the human person from the Absolute. Windelband describing the development of Fichte's philosophy writes of his later doctrine, "in which he paid to the victory of Spinozism the tribute of making *the infinite impulse of the I proceed forth from an 'absolute Being'* (*Sein*) and be directed toward the same." [27]

This experience of receptiveness does not depreciate human personality but enhances it. Paul's "By the grace of God I am what I am" is an expression of peculiar moment, since it connects grace directly and explicitly with the development of personality. With modest self-assurance the apostle

[25] "For the sacred glow that rayeth over everything, in that most like itself is the most living." *Paradiso,* Canto VII, ll. 74, 75. Translation by Wicksteed.

[26] *Adventures of Ideas,* p. 205. *Cf. supra,* p. 145.

[27] *A History of Philosophy,* translated by James H. Tufts, p. 610. The Macmillan Company, 1923. (Italics mine.)

in these words stoutly affirms his free moral and spiritual selfhood, won by his own conscious effort, yet, at the same time, ascribes it, and the very effort he has put forth to win it, to the self-imparting grace of the Supreme Person.

XII

Grace is far from being the conferring of external benefits, as Aldous Huxley, *e.g.*, has misrepresented it,[28] a sort of doting favoritism, but is rather a conferring of the Divine One Himself upon all who will receive Him.

This Divine Self-impartation may be consciously received quite apart from—and even more richly on account of—the absence of all favorable earthly circumstance and advantage. This is pure giving and receiving of grace, such as one has when one whom he greatly reveres and loves treats him as if he were worthy of unreserved confidence and companionship. Nothing calls out such gratitude as this bestowal, not of gifts but of the Supreme One Himself. Perhaps the most moving expression of this in all religious literature is the lofty refrain that closes the prophecy of Habakkuk:

> Though the fig-tree may not blossom,
> though no fruit is on the vine,
> though the olive crop has failed,
> though the fields give us no food,
> though the folds have lost their flocks,
> and in the stalls no cattle lie,

[28] "Grace, Predestination, and Salvation," *The Hibbert Journal*, January, 1931.

yet in the Eternal we will find our joy,
we will rejoice in the God who saves us.
The Lord, the Eternal, is our strength,
he makes our feet sure as the feet of hinds,
helps us to keep our footing on the heights.[29]

XIII

Thus we find that by looking into the nature of personality itself as disclosed in its developmental, ideal, and perfect forms, there may be discovered a larger meaning of the Christian conceptions of human worth and of the Divine Unity and a more intelligent understanding of the experience which has issued in the Christian doctrines of the Divine Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence.

Personality, the highest value and the ultimate reality—having its infinite source and goal in Him who is Perfect Beauty pervading all that is beautiful, Perfect Truth validating all that is true, and Perfect Goodness typifying all that is good—and finding its finite yet unlimited developmental realization in man and its highest human expression and achievement in Christ; Nature the matrix and instrument, and life the school of personality: such are the clearly discernible

[29] Translation by James Moffatt, George H. Doran Co., 1925. Dr. Moffatt's *Grace in the New Testament* (Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, New York, 1932), which has appeared since the above was written, is a signal and valuable interpretation of the doctrine of Grace. The author writes: "A throb of new life beats in every syllable about grace uttered in the first century" (p. 392). *Cf.* also, Oman, John W., *Grace and Personality,* The Macmillan Co., 1925, and *The Doctrine of Grace* (edited by W. T. Whitley), The Macmillan Co., 1932.

coast-lines of the Realm of Personal Reality, as they are traced in Christianity.[30]

They remain, together with their hinterland, to be more fully explored, with the promise of increasingly fruitful results. For when personality is made central in philosophy, in theology, in ethics, above all in motive and conduct, other forms of reality and value take on larger meaning and fall into an ordered and progressive harmony.

[30] It is by no means intended that this summary represents formulations of exact and clearly definable truths, but only embodiments of great realities that pervade and actuate religious experience and that need conceptual form in order to fulfill their true purpose and meaning.

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